

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Lorin T. Gill

Lorin T. Gill, the younger of Thomas and Lorin Tarr Gill's two sons, was born July 2, 1928 in Honolulu. He was raised in Tantalus where he hiked and gained a knowledge of and appreciation for nature.

He was educated at Lincoln School, Stevenson Intermediate School, and graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1946. He received a bachelor's degree in government from the University of Hawai'i in 1951.

After completing two years in the university's School of Social Work, he joined Pālāma Settlement in 1953. Active in hiking and conservation circles most of his life, he was instrumental in developing the camping programs at the settlement. He served as group worker, group work supervisor, and was promoted to program director in 1959. In 1964 he became the executive director, a position he held for six years.

In 1979 Gill became the education coordinator for the Moanalua Gardens Foundation. He continues to reside in Tantalus.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Lorin T. Gill (LG)

Honolulu, O'ahu

November 21, 1997

BY: Holly Yamada (HY)

HY: This an interview with Lorin Gill, we're at the University of Hawai'i, it's November 21, 1997 and the interviewer is Holly Yamada.

LG: The reason I'd like to start with the camping aspect at Pālama . . .

HY: Oh, okay.

LG: . . . number one, my first year in grad[uate] school in social work was not really very convincing. Fieldwork was at a [Department of] Parks and Recreation center in Kalihi. It was all right, but I didn't see it all come together until I spent two weeks as a summer camp counselor at Pālama-by-the-Sea. In that July, in fact, I came back from a hike on Moloka'i to do it. And I could see, in the time that you have, the initial testing that the kids do of each other, and of you, and so on, and the things they want to do and the pressures that can be applied and that they apply on each other, the attitude turnarounds that can happen in a two-week period. So I saw kind of a year process collapsed in the two weeks in camping of a fourteen-day period. It was very, very effective. But anyway, that hooked me. And so my second year of fieldwork was at Pālama Settlement.

HY: And this would've been. . . .

LG: Good Lord, it would've been first semester, and second semester of the '52, '53 year, I guess it was.

HY: Okay.

LG: Because they hired me on a grant from the Junior League (of Honolulu), I think, right after we ended that student work. And then it wasn't until next January that I got into the budget. It was easily in early '52 or early '53. I'd have to go back and count.

So one of the first areas that I was involved in was directing the camp after a little bit. And then we lost the Pālama-by-the-Sea to a (tsunami) on March 9 of '57, but we'd already been outposting. My interests were very definitely mountains and hiking and taking the kids into that situation.

And we had quite a bit of a problem at Pālama-by-the-Sea because there had been a neighborhood subdivision developed on land that had formerly been sand dunes, and one guy's daughter was over vamping my junior leaders and he was going to call the police on us, and I said, "Why don't you keep your girl home?" And on, and on, and on, and then they [the neighbors] called the cops on our campfire program, which was noisy at nine P.M. And there were lot of reasons that increasing urbanization was a problem.

So we had been sending the kids up for about three or four days in the mountains at places that I had chosen. And one of them turned out to be very desirable—access to the trails, we'd go down to some of the best swimming holes on the island, and right on the edge of forest reserve, and the plantation water system nearby, and a paved road, and so on. And so when the (tsunami) came we negotiated with, I guess it was Dole [Corporation] and Bishop Estate, to get a temporary lease on that spot.

And the beautiful thing was, I told the parents, "If you want a camp for your kids this summer, you're gonna have to come build it," because Pālama-by-the-Sea was devastated. Cabins had floated over into the farmer's fields, the stove had fallen through the floor in the kitchen, and I had just put out all the new beds and they're the ones that got hit by the salt water and were all rusty. (Chuckles)

So by June of that year we had the beginnings of a [new] camp [Pālama Uka Camp at 'Ōpae'ula]. And it was a real drawing together of the parents on behalf of their kids, which was something that you know is out there, and you see it when they help with the swim team or something of that sort, but I'd never seen it gel so beautifully. I remember Mr. Gonsalves took sick leave from the city and county refuse department because he had a broken finger or something, and he was up there swinging a pick axe with his hand in a splint. (Chuckles) And they would potluck, and work was done at clearing and such. They did a lot of tree trimming. The families would gather for their beer and songs in one of our areas and I'd take the kids. Everybody's yelling at the kids, "Don't climb the tree. Get out of the tree, get out of the tree."

"Don't worry, don't worry, I'll take care of them." So I'd take 'em around the corner and we'd climb trees. (Laughs) Kids went down to what later became called "baby pond." Well, it was a very primitive camp for the first year.

Second year we had a water trailer that we hauled, maybe we did that my first year. We had some fifty-five gallon drums, and kids come from the city and so they'd watch us pump the water into the drums, and then they'd leave the faucet running. (Chuckles) But by the—I think it was—the second or third, might've been two years when one of our neighborhood men [who] was a plumber, supervised the laying of our water system. Actually, I laid it.

We got the [sugar] plantation [Waialua Agricultural Company] to come in and put its scraper on the edge and dig 3,000 feet of trenching and, with some junior leaders, I rolled out all this hose and fastened it together and plantation came back and buried it. No time to test it. So Tony Kaleiwahea, this six foot, six [inches] plumber, parent of some of our better camping kids, "These stupid social workers—3,000 feet of pipe buried, and blah, blah, blah," and he going on, and on, and on. And so (chuckles) they came up to test it.

The main line had a lot of things went off to different elements, and he would turn 'em off because he wanted to test the main line. Well, I didn't know that. And so, I go back up and

(chuckles) I'm turning them on.

(Laughter)

LG: And he's waiting for the water to come out the end, but in the meantime it's filling a fifty-gallon heater. And finally he sees that things are on and he says, "Who the hell turned these things on?" And he says, "Gill, see that tree over there, go sit under it, and stay there." (HY laughs.)

"Yes sir." (Laughs) And then finally, the pipes gushed as the water came through. And there were about sixty parents doing an impromptu maypole dance around this water pipe.

(Laughter)

LG: This was definitely a community effort. The fathers would come down [to Pālama Settlement] after work. We got some donated materials, and they would construct the platforms on the old tennis court under the night lights. On the weekend we would come and we'd put 'em on the truck and haul 'em up [to the new camp site] and we'd have a cabin raising. And the teenagers were working on that and everything. I'll get into a little bit of the program in a minute.

So down the line, I don't want his name used, but some years later he was of the opinion that we were spending too much time up there [at the camp] and taking time from other things, and so he was making arrangements with the Boy Scouts to give it to them.

And he was misinformed by the then Council of Social Agencies, which told him there are a lot of camps [that are empty]. Now there are a lot of camps, they stand empty unless you're doing school camping during the school year. Lot of them are doing school camping now, so they're not empty. But they're certainly not empty during the summertime [either], and we wouldn't have had a place to send our kids out of the city.

Well, the board of trustees [for Pālama Settlement] set up a committee and they studied the situation and they agreed with me and not with him, and so he resigned from the board, but he came back. And that's okay; we're sort of friends. But was cute because some of the big fellas, who'd gone as campers and who'd helped build a number of facilities—in fact, I put up two cabins (with them) in the time that it took a group of Pālama alumni, most of whom were lawyers, to make only the foundation for one, because I worked with my teenagers and they did what they were told, and these guys argued all the time. (Chuckles)

And they were sitting on the front steps of the building, as kids of a certain age always do, and [he] came up and they knew that he was the one that wanted to get rid of the camp, and they're saying, "Who the hell he think he is? That's our place, we built that, that's our second home. That's where we can make all the noise, nobody call the cops, that's our place. Who him?" (Chuckles) And then they looked at me—my nickname is Kink—and they said, "Kink, you like us take him behind the gym?" (Laughs)

And, "No, no, no. Don't worry about it, we got a committee, it's gonna be all right." That would've been so funny, he never knew that.

But this was the love they had for the place, and to get away from the city. Well, that's their motive. Our motives were really quite something else. And then the shifting of the program involved their leadership. And I had a hiking group, we used to just do a hike a month for whoever wanted to come. And then if you went on three hikes, and you had behaved yourself and listened, then you'd come on some special hikes. So this special group involved teenagers and some of their parents. We did interisland trips and Haleakalā and a number of things. And these kids were really in tune with the outdoors.

Well, our first counselors [at] Pālama Uka were Mainland surfers from the North Shore that had camping experience and they had some college education, and I had my fingers crossed. And they wouldn't eat rice and they wouldn't eat anything that didn't have a Del Monte label on it and whatnot, so they went kind of hungry up at the camp.

But I had to somehow have them be able to communicate with our local kids. And so I put my best hiking kids, who were high school, in as assistants, as junior assistants. So a unit of two cabins, each holding eight kids and an adult, would have one college-trained, camp-experience counselor, who didn't know anything about us, and one of our Pālama boys, who knew everything about us, and who I was trying to get to go on to college. So you had a really good partnership in that situation.

In fact, it was only when I brought my hiking kids in that they began to utilize the view and look into the mountains and drink the air and these other things, because prior to that time the Mainlanders had mostly [organized] mud fights and softball [activities]. (Chuckles) You know, they just didn't know the islands. So the program really was greatly enhanced by involving our own kids, who, in some cases became counselors, but they had to meet the education requirements, but they were always there as the integrators of it. So, very positive experiences.

Then the treatment aspect we learned long ago. And Pālama was always very desirable, desired by the workers in family court for placement of kids during the summertime. And there were community grants, we used some of them for our own kids. And the court used them and placed the kids. We learned very early on, I did, certainly in the Pālama-by-the-Sea experience, that if the non-Pālama kid takes over the camp, it's a bad experience for everybody, including the referral. So after one year's experience with it, I set a limit that of any camping group, one less than half could be referrals. See, [if] you've got eight kids, that means three referrals, five Pālama kids. And the referrals have to be a year younger than the median age of that cabin. And this is a standard we followed all the way through in the time I was there, and the Pālama kids were in control. And even though some of them are court referrals too, still they have a Pālama culture, and they can bring the other kids along. And it's a good experience for the referral. So with that, Pālama Uka and everything were very successful.

But we also learned the use of a three-day camp, or a four-day camp, was a disaster. Like we do in the spring recess or something, because the kids don't settle their grievances at camp, they wait until they get back and they do it behind the gym.

HY: So a longer period of time . . .

LG: Oh yeah, a longer period of time, things have to surface. And so if you have a two-week program, and you've got these ratios I speak of, you'll see the insecure kid trying to buy the

others early on. I remember one girl who came and put candy on everybody's bed and then thought that entitled her to be a little snot. (Chuckles) They didn't let her get away with it. They gave her back her candy and tuned her up.

But the crisis will develop. They know they're gonna be there for two weeks, and you control the entire environment, except for the weather. And that you can predict, if you understand it. And if you got counselors who would move in on situations and a director who would move in on a counselor who is not moving in, it can be very therapeutic because the first problems will come up in three or four days.

And the kids will usually clobber the offender, who's usually earned it, but doesn't understand that he has. So then what social work calls the use of self, you have to kind of put your foot on both sides of the scales, and you have to take the kid off behind a tree someplace and have him think about why they did this to him and was there anything he did to provoke it, and all that jazz. And he's going to try, he thinks maybe, but he doesn't really mean it. And so you talk to the cabin group, and the counselor does, and maybe it helped. So his behavioral change is very superficial, it's not a change at all, and in another four or five days we've got trouble again, real trouble again. This time he's really devastated. And so nobody changes behavior until the behavior is unsatisfactory to him and he wants to change it.

That's just one of the rules, and so you have to get it. You have to have him be sufficiently unhappy with his situation that he does want to make some changes, concessions. And then you kind of have to help him figure out what those need to be. Then quick, you have to get to the cabin group and tell them that, in your best judgment, good faith, he's really going to try. So if he does, give him a break.

HY: Did you learn these, I guess these techniques and your observations about this through your social work training, or . . .

LG: Experience.

HY: . . . kind of on the job.

LG: The concepts are there in the training but you have to see it happen. And as I say, I had seen this happen to a degree in my first camping experience. I knew this was a real good venue for making changes. But then by the third time things come up, the kid does try, and the group does support him, and he does like the feeling, and he changes, and he comes home a different guy. (Chuckles) You can do it in two weeks.

It'd take you a year at the settlement because you don't have that total control of [the environment]. And you can't do it in a week, but you can do it in two. And I can pretty much guarantee maybe a 70 percent take. So the nicest thing is to have some adult come up and tell you, "You know, if it weren't for Pālama, I'd be in jail." (Chuckles)

HY: Yeah. Now, you think this is true for all age groups? Or you targeting a certain age group?

LG: That method, residence camp again, you really don't take kids out for that length of time unless they're probably ten or twelve years old. It's too long to be away from home. But when they're casting off from the parental controls, and they haven't adopted society's controls, and

their immediate society are their peers, not all of them are good examples, you've got a time between twelve and sixteen that's very critical.

In fact, when I hired social workers, group workers, we rarely had a case where—not that this had much difference, but group workers were in the real world, caseworkers were behind the desk. (Laughs) I have good friends who are caseworkers.

(Laughter)

LG: But I would try to get up a commitment from the person [the newly hired social worker]. I couldn't put it in contract, but it's saying, "I want you here for five years. If you're going to enter a kid's life when he's seven, I want you to still be here when he's twelve. Because if you pull out when he's in the midst of changes and he's depending on you and he's trusted you, he's not going to trust anybody else. And if you come in when he's twelve, I want you here when he's graduating from high school."

HY: Well, did you find that people were willing to make that kind of commitment?

LG: Sometimes. But only if they understood why and if they had their local roots, and they didn't have something else down the line. This flew right in the face of what we were taught in the school of social work. Which is in your first year, you're learning the job. Your second year, you're perfecting your skills and paying back the agency. Maybe your third year, you're paying back the agency. And then fourth year, you should get out and find something else to further enhance your professional development. That would have left an awful lot of kids on the reef, and so I was there for seventeen years.

HY: Maybe we can back up, way back, and I just need to ask you your birth date and . . .

LG: Oh.

HY: When and where were you born?

LG: I was born, I think in, third floor of Queen's Hospital, on July 2 of 1928. I think it was the old Kapi'olani wing, I'm not sure, I didn't read the sign. (Chuckles)

HY: And maybe you could talk a little bit about your folks.

LG: My dad [Thomas Gill] . . .

HY: He was an architect?

LG: Yeah, he was a pioneer architect, not the first. He was from New York, upstate. They were very wealthy. When his parents died in [18]91, he went to Puget Sound, [Washington,] did pro bono architectural work, married a gal up there. [In 18]98 they started around the world and [Hawai'i] was the first port of call, and he got word from his brother, who was managing the inheritance, that everything's lost in the stock market crash, and so Dad was stranded. And he said, "Well, looks fine to me, this is far enough." And his wife didn't like all the funny-looking people, so he suggested that she go back to Bellingham, [Washington] and think about it, and she went back and stayed.

And Dad worked for [Harry L.] Kerr, and then he initiated the six-foot eave, the hipped roof, the casement windows that you can adjust for Kona winds or Ko'olau winds, the big lanais under the six-foot eave. Because he said that everything here was either Victorian or Cape Cod, or false front Western, it was ridiculous there was nothing built for the tropics. And so that's his style. There are several houses here in Mānoa that, well I know four of them at any rate, they used to call Mānoa "Gill's Valley," because he built so many things up here in the early days.

And Mother [Lorin Tarr Gill] was from Kansas and she had married into the army to get away from home. Douglas MacArthur was her husband's best man. It was funny, you know, Douglas MacArthur was quite a stagehog, and the girls in Leavenworth always wanted to know why Mother wasn't head over heels for him the way everybody else was. And she said, "Well, when I get married, I want to have time in front of my own mirror." (Chuckles)

He used to come into the bachelor's officer's quarters, and he'd arrive late—all his guests were all there—and two lackeys would take his velvet smoking robe off of him, and so on, and so on. Well anyway, when MacArthur's first wife divorced him, one of her complaints was she couldn't get in front of her mirror.

(Laughter)

LG: So Mom came out here with this North Carolinian (army) engineer and they met my dad because he was an engineer and was building a theater at Fort Shafter and he had to have a local architect's approval of the plans. And Dad said, "Well, if you don't put trusses in here and here and here, it's going to fall down in five years." And they became friends. And then because Dad's wife was gone—my half sister had gone too by then.

HY: This was from your father's first marriage?

LG: Yeah, right. And Kate's [LG's half sister's] birthday was the same day as the queen's [Lili'uokalani's], so up until the queen was getting old, they used to always visit on the queen's birthday and she always remembered Kate and asked her about school and give her candy and whatnot. But then I guess the girl left here when she was about twelve or so.

Anyhow, one of the stories that Mother told was that they were on this army-sponsored picnic around Hanauma, and camped at Hanauma. My dad was a guest. She wanted to go up and see the sunrise and sunset from the top of the hill, and her very pragmatic engineer husband said, "There's nothing but an aberration in your retina, you know." (HY chuckles.) And so, but Dad was willing to go up and watch the sun set and the moon rise, and the moon set and the sun rise. (Laughs) But what really turned Mother off on her first husband was a reception held at the armory by Princess Abby [Abigail] Kawananakoa. And she would've been the queen had things continued. And they're in the reception line and this North Carolinian husband of my mother's says, when they finally get up there, says, "I don't want to kiss that nigger's hand. We're leaving."

And Mother says, "Well, I have my driver, you can leave." And she became good friends with Princess Abby. So, she took to the islands, just as Dad did.

(Laughter)

LG: There's a lot more to it, but anyway, that's basically it. And I'm very grateful that they did. I've been all over the world and I've never found a place where they do things quite the same way. There are lots of nice places, but even when there are many ethnic groups, they're always such a rigid block that's in opposition to another one. Kuala Lumpur for instance, here you got Indians, Malay and Chinese, but they're not getting along, particularly. It's just not like Hawai'i. So that's the long and short of it.

And Mother was a writer, she wanted to go into journalism and go to the Columbia School of Journalism in Missouri. Instead of that, her mother said ladies go to finishing school, so she went to finishing school. Then she did a substantial news coup and made her name. There was a conscientious objector in the first World War who was locked up in Leavenworth and he wouldn't talk to anybody. And so the editor fellow sent this young pup to interview this guy—and he [the conscientious objector] wouldn't talk to her, so she began writing it in her pad. And he wanted to know what she's writing about. She says, "I'm writing about why you won't talk to me." (Laughs) So he opened up and she got the story. Her name was very well known by people up until very recently.

And then she worked for the Bishop Museum for Dr. [Herbert] Gregory. She didn't work for the museum, she was free lance, but Dr. Gregory would not let anyone else popularize research from the museum, only my mother, because she was accurate. Anything that was going to go into the media or into popular magazines and such. And I think maybe my penchant for editorial accuracy, which is one of the rules I still play at MGF [Moanalua Gardens Foundation] stems from a story she never got over.

There had been some research done on the skink that came in on Polynesian canoes and they found some fossils, some bone evidence of it—four-inch long Hawaiian skink. Well, the typesetter had never heard of a skink, so he put a *u* instead of an *i*, and she's now published in the records as four-inch long Hawaiian skunk. (HY laughs.) And she never got over it, and I never stopped hearing about it.

(Laughter)

LG: And then she worked for the [*Honolulu*] *Star-Bulletin* during the depression. Architects just simply didn't have anything here. They were jumping out of fifth-story windows and such. Nobody built from '29 on until, well Dad's last work was for us in '37 in Waikiki. And so she was working at the *Bulletin*, this is Big Five days, okay? Good, you know that. (Chuckles) Lot of young kids don't.

Kress's [SH Kress and Company] opened, and the *Star-Bulletin* employees were brought into the editor's office. Riley Allen told [them] that if they were seen shopping in Kress's, the first Mainland chain, outside of Big Five, Liberty House, et cetera, if you're seen shopping in Kress's, you lose your job.

And later she was doing free-lance publicity for the Young Hotel roof garden, which had recently reopened. In fact, that's where she first saw my dad, but that was a long time ago. [Her publicity work] was cutting into the Royal Hawaiian [Hotel], and the Athertons [major stockholders of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*] who were key in it [the Royal Hawaiian Hotel], learned who was doing it [the publicity], so the editor calls her in, says, "You got two kids at home, this is depression, you give up that Young Hotel stuff, or you've lost your job." So in

1936, when her mother died, and left her a substantial amount, she went back and settled the estate. When she came back here on the boat, this was in '36, I remember we didn't even go home, I mean, we didn't go straight home. We went straight to the *Star-Bulletin*, she walked into Riley Allen's office and gave him two-weeks notice. (Laughs)

And Dad had already taken an option on this Waikīkī land, knowing the inheritance was there, and the Hawaiian Trust [Company] people all just laughed at him and figured it was an easy take, they'd collect the option because they knew he didn't have anything. Then a while later he comes in and confirms the option and they were kind of ticked, they lost an easy one. Anyway, we have not been a Big Five family, and I'll give you another story.

The Japanese [sugar workers] strike in 1920—have you ever read Kazuo Miyamoto's [*Hawai'i End of the Rainbow*?

HY: No.

LG: Well, he describes the Hāmākua [sugar labor] situation. The *Hawai'i Hochi* was the only liberal paper we had, and [the editor and publisher] Fred [Kinzaburo] Makino was a very fine man. Dad liked him. So the O'ahu goon squads bombed the *Hawai'i Hochi* press, I think it was in '22, somewhere in there. And Dad wasn't involved in sugar or anything, but he said, "That's not the way you play the game." So he went down and contributed his architectural talents to the rebuilding of a new press, for free, pro bono. That ticked off the kamaāina elite.

When Dad first arrived here in 1898, he was advised as an architect he should join Central Union [Church] because that's where all the contacts are. And Central Union in those days was right across from Washington Place. And he said, "Well if that's the kind of church it is, I'll never set foot in it." (Chuckles) Never did.

HY: A maverick?

LG: No, personal principle. One of my memories, I was about six years old or so, and we'd driven to Dad's office on Merchant Street, *makai* side, between Alakea and Richards [streets], two-story building. I was going up the stairs and they had a landing and then continued on. This bundle of arms and legs came hurdling down the stairs, hit the landing, got up, and ran out the door, and I was plastered against the wall. And then I saw my dad at the top of the stairs, my mother's downstairs, "Let's go home."

I never knew what that was about till many, many years later when Mother told me that Dad had a contract from the city to build a school and the mayor was [George] Wright at that time, as in Mayor Wright [Homes] housing. And building inspector had come to my dad because architects supervised their own work in those days, and he makes specifications, and he wants to make sure specifications are met and that materials are up to standard and all. The building inspector had come and said that if Dad would be willing to allow base materials, poorer materials, to be substituted for his specs [specifications], then the difference in the savings would be split between the mayor's office and my dad. And dad had picked him up by the collar and the seat of the pants and waltzed about his office and thrown him down the stairs. (Chuckles) And the next day he took the plans in to the mayor and demanded to know what was going on, and the mayor said, "Well, that's the way it's always been, Tom." So he threw the plans in his face and that was the end of that. It was depression days, and Mother said we

were down to a bowl of carrots and fourteen cents, but it was okay. (Chuckles) So anyway, we're not Big Five.

(Laughter)

HY: I guess not.

LG: And we're not Punahou [School] either. (Chuckles)

HY: Maybe you could talk about what you know of your paternal grandparents.

LG: Oh, you really want to get involved here. From my mother's side, she was a mixture of slavers and abolitionists. The Cabels of Virginia, Flora McDonald of Scotland, her daughter was a Cabel, or married into the Cabel, Patrick Henry was a Cabel, they were slave owners. And mother's grandmother was a slave owner who dressed in black when the South lost the [Civil] War. The Tarr side, T-A-R-R, which is my middle name, it's a corruption of Dherr, D-H-E-R-R, which is Pennsylvania Dutch or something. William Tarr, back when they made the cannonballs for Oliver Perry in the battle of Lake Erie, probably one of our first war profiteers, and his side, the Ohio side, were abolitionists and the freedom railway.

Everybody was trying to settle Kansas before the Civil War to make it one of the other [side]. So the Cabels were settled in Kansas to help make it a slave state, by vote. And the Tarrs settled in Kansas to help make it a free state, by vote. Well, they married. (Chuckles) Mother left home. (Chuckles) She said there was a Yankee sword and a rebel sword crossed over the fireplace, and that was the way that life was generally. But she greatly loved her dad.

HY: Did they have a plantation?

LG: The Cabel side had plenty, they were previous slave owners in the south, Virginia, the Virginia Cabels. There's a book *Cabels and Their Kin*. Well, I have a picture on the wall—had—oil painting of sweet Grandpa Tarr and his wife, Lorinda, formerly Cabel, now Tarr, and this is pre-Civil War so she's dressed in blue with her broach, and quite a pretty girl, pretty lady, kind of stern.

Well, my mother got divorced from the North Carolinian engineer in the army. This was a disgrace, people didn't get divorced back then, you lived with it. And her grandmother, this Cabel lady who, no longer having slaves, and having dressed in black, and could only enslave her immediate family and dominated everything, was standing at the top of the stairs pounding her ebony cane, and telling my mother's mother that she's going to be disinherited if she allowed her daughter to marry that sandwich islander, that Hawaiian out there, (HY chuckles) who's descended from Spanish nobility, but anyway. (Chuckles)

So she changed her will, and fortunately, died of a stroke before she could sign it. That's why Mother went back and settled the inheritance. Well, Mother brought things down here in 1936 for this house. Her mother had eighteen rooms of antiques and our little place on Tantalus [Drive] has these things that I've been told since I was a child, "You can't sit on that, it's 200 years old. You can't sit on that, you can't sit on that." (Chuckles) And here are these ancestors on the wall. I came back from a trip and Lorinda was no longer on the wall and her cord had broken and she's down behind the sideboard, which is kind of heavy for me to move, and

she's still behind the sideboard, but I know where she is. She can stay there.

(Laughter)

LG: Pretty Grandpa's still on the wall.

Dad's side of the family—well, the Gills, the original spelling is G-H-Y-L-L. There were two Normans, mercenary brothers with William the Conqueror—Ghyll. So it's a Norse name that means dweller of a small valley, which I still am. So they went into Normandy—went into England in 1066 and William was busy giving away all the Saxon lands and plans, so he gave one brother much of Ireland, so there are a lot of Gills in Ireland, and the other brother, he gave him Lancashire, and that's the side that we're from.

So it comes on down, and Robert Gill was the first one to come to the Americas. His father, Thomas Gill, was a doctor in Liverpool and Robert was in the British Navy and he was captured by the Yanks in the revolution, and fell in love with a daughter of Theophilus Anthony, the Dutch settlers in the Hudson, who preceded the English. And so he joined the Yankee cause and married his wife and helped forge the chain across West Park that turned back the British ships and so on.

Then his son got into the clipper ship business, and there was a window in the 1840s and [18]50s when people made megabucks by having clipper ships. And the *Flying Cloud* was one of these ships [that sailed] all around the world. His [Robert Gill's] son was Charles, who was a doctor, had a Gill streak in him. He got kicked out of Princeton [University] for helping put a cow up in the tower, which is an old trick the students did, and they shoot the cow to get it down, because they [the cows] won't back up. [He had] (gone to school) in Heidelberg, [Germany,] and was supposed to receive the Heidelberg scar, so he challenged the fencing master—he was one of the top swordsman in America. Instead of getting a scar he split the fencing master's nose open, so he was stuck in the brig in old Heidelberg, and then he went to Switzerland to finish his medical work.

I was in the old upstairs of the old Heidelberg university, and they [had] had two (rooms for) certain American students, who were kept in the brig—one [room] for French and one for English and one for Italians—and they feed 'em bread and water and guys would masticate the bread and make little cameos, portraits of themselves on the wall and sign them. Thousands of 'em, but I cannot find my grandad's. (Laughs)

But anyway, because of the clipper ships, he was very well off. And I'm not sure how he got to Cuba, but my grandmother, Maria Josefa de los Delores Andrea Rosa de Jesus Ponce de Leon y Ruiz de Gill, Gill was a married name, was a direct descendant—do you know what *criollo* is?

HY: *Criollo*.

LG: It's the original word for creole. *Criollo* is a Spaniard born in the colonies. And her Ponce de Leon line was one of the five grandee families of Spain, and Don Roderigo Ponce de Leon was the one who helped send Spain into the dark ages by kicking the Moors out of Granada; he captured the Alcazar. And his son was sent by Philip II to the New World to represent the crown [as a] captain general, in different administrations in Spanish colonial—Bogotá was one,

Mexico City was one, Española was one. And so he was in Española, and the object, the commission, was to make sure the conquistadors don't cheat the king, but also to see that they don't abuse the Indians. This is something that you don't get in your American history. If the Indian converts, he's as good as a Spaniard if he becomes a Christian, okay?

[The] Aztec [rulers, the] Montezumas---I'm digressing, but I want to make a point, Montezuma's daughter married a Spanish captain from Cáceres, which is in Western Spain. Their son, this mestizo, was a nobleman by Indian standards, and by Spanish standards, and he went home to Cáceres and the family is there. I see in the town house, right in the middle of Cáceres, and on the tower, (which looks like the) Roosevelt High School tower, is the *escudo*, the coat of arms. It's half Spanish, half Aztec. And this is not an English attitude (laughs), it's a Spanish attitude.

So my ancestor's job was to---well it was right on the heels of one Friar Landa, [who] burned all the Mayan books, and treated the Mayans so badly. Another thing that's not known---the Inquisition called him back to Spain and put him on the spot to explain what he was doing to these Maya who had converted. He had no right to do this, so he was pilloried by the Inquisition, and he had to write everything he knew about the Maya. Ninety-eight percent of what we know about pre-contact Maya comes from his writings. (Chuckles) But this is all that period.

So the family stayed on in Cuba, and Grandmother's brother, José Antonio, was one of those followers of Simón Bolívar. This time the colonies wanted, not so much freedom from Spain, but they wanted to be treated right, wanted equity, in fact. So Antonio and some other, I guess Cubans, Cubanos, [who] stormed into a ministry and forced the minister, who was in charge of the colonies, to sign certain documents they drafted---more freedom for the colonies. And he [the minister] didn't. Two weeks later all the students were rounded up and executed. So my granduncle was executed at the age of twenty-two.

So Grandmother's father was still the captain general, still representing the crown, and this is Domingo. Well, he was kind of an embarrassment to the crown, and his kids were kind of an embarrassment to him, and so he wasn't getting very far. So when Grandmother married the American he came to New York and brought his whole libraries and everything, and he left the service of the crown.

But one of the fun stories is, whatever the official residence was, the government residence, there was a grand ball, this is before the Civil War, 1850s or so. And my grandfather, the physician, is with his court dress and his silk stockings and whatnot, and his sword. And he sees this other guy kind of making time with Maria Josefa, who's he's intending to marry, and this other fella had these very nicely turned calves and these white silk stockings and Granddad suspected what they [the calves] were, and on the dance floor took his sword and nicked him. And they were falsies. And so the guy is dancing around the room with sawdust trickling out of his stockings (laughs). So, it's a Gill trait.

(Laughter)

LG: But during the Civil War . . .

HY: Let me just flip the tape here.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

LG: [During the] war Granddad was a physician for the federal armies. But in the battle stations he treated any wounded, federal or confederate, and this caused Congress to take away his citizenship. He treated the enemy. I'm not sure when that happened, either right during the war or the end of the Civil War—he died in 1891—he did get his citizenship back posthumously, in 1896. And this is how bitter civil war was. But anyway, it's a matter of principle, he's a doctor and [a soldier is] wounded.

So that's the English Spanish connection from my father's side and the abolitionist slavery connection from my mother's side. And we always used to say, "Well, all the Gills are on the other side of the Hudson [River], hope they stay there, but that isn't the case."

(Laughter)

LG: My mother pretty much preferred my dad's relatives to her own. And so we're thoroughly enmeshed in Hawai'i and my brother [Tom P. Gill] had six kids, so he did my share.

HY: Did you have other siblings?

LG: No, just the two of us. Mother was the first successful cesarian [section] in U.S. history where both child and mother survived. My half brother, who just died a few months ago, born in New Orleans, [Louisiana] to her first husband, and the Army doctors [didn't know] what they were doing, and there happened to be an Austrian specialist in New Orleans at the time, and they called him in. He said, "You're killing this woman." And he performed the cesarian and both mother and child lived, first instance in U.S. history. And so, I was her third. In those days, you're not supposed to do too many of those.

HY: Maybe you could talk of moving . . .

LG: We're not talking about Pālama now, this is bad news. (Chuckles)

HY: Maybe you could talk a little bit about your childhood.

LG: I grew up on Tantalus, I still live in the same house.

HY: Did you play with kids in that neighborhood?

LG: There weren't any. (Chuckles) I played with the dogs. My brother is six years older and sometimes his friends would hike up from Mānoa, right up the old side of the trail, and I would be tolerated. He was very good to me. In fact, I remember I got tired out in Pauoa Flats when I was about four or five and Tom carried me around piggyback for a while. And then the folks were down at work and he was in charge of me, which didn't lead to a great deal of friendship until we were both adults.

HY: Is that where you kind of learned your love for the outdoors?

LG: I grew up right in. . . . Dad was very instrumental in this. He would take us, we always did, at least once a month, walk along the Mānoa cliff trail. And even out in the garden I remember him—I'd turn over a rock or something, things would crawl out and he'd help me wonder about what they were doing and where they were going and what they were made of and examine them more closely, and he always enhanced that. And walking, hiking on the mountains was just a thing we did, that was family activity.

The only other kids on the mountain were six years younger, the Black boys. And so Carol Black used to call up my mother and ask if I could come over and play, which really meant I'm gonna babysit, but I didn't know it, so I'd come over and "play." (Laughs) And then she'd go about her housework while I was out in the yard with the kids.

Yeah, we did a lot in the woods. We always had dogs, German shepherds. I was raised by a German shepherd and I helped raise a few of them, too. And they were trained to go home if we were in trouble. We were to say, "Go home," and the dog was supposed to go home, scratch on the door and get my dad's attention. The only time I understand it worked was when my brother violated the boundary and went over into the forest where he wasn't supposed to go without somebody with him, and the dog knew this, and the dog went home and called my dad and my dad caught my brother. (Laughs)

But prisoners used to escape and head for Tantalus because there were vacation cottages and things, I don't know, about sixty houses and they might have food in them. I'd be out in Pauoa Flats. I remember one fellow that was dressed in denims and it was middle of the working day, strange-looking hiker from my experience, and my big police dog didn't like him and growled and I held the dog by the collar and we went on by him and he just kind of stood stiff, and then I reported it when I got home and he was one of the guys we were looking for, so dogs were a big factor.

But then, with no kids on the mountain, I remember I used to phone up some of the neighbors and ask them if I could come play with their dog. And I knew the dogs (HY chuckles), so I go up and have a nice time with their dog for a couple hours (chuckles) and go. And we had a rule that you could play out in the forest as long as you want but when the mynah birds started to go to bed, we'd turn and come home. And there aren't any up there now, but there used to be loads of mynah birds, and when they nest around half hour before sundown, the racket they make, oh, stop what you doing—ti leaf sliding or having a ginger fight or building a ti leaf house or something.

HY: Who was the disciplinarian in your family?

LG: Dad. He had a very effective method. We still have coffee in the yard, the arabica coffee. And the young ones made a real handy little switch, and when we'd done something that was absolutely not right, Dad would say, "Well, can you explain why?"

And you say, "No."

"Go cut yourself a switch."

"Aw." Two hours later (chuckles) agonizing. If I get it too thin, he's gonna get a bigger one. If I get it too big, it's gonna hurt too much. (Laughs) How am I gonna choose?

And he'd call, "Have you found a switch yet?" What a psychologist.

(Laughter)

LG: And so couple hours later, bring the switch and get a whack across the back of the legs and that was it.

I don't know if you know, but I'm very active in conservation circles—Conservation Council for Hawai'i and environmental education and all that jazz. We had a place up above the house in the woods we called the paperbarks where these trees had been planted and Tom and his friends and I used to play football in there. And I got real—you know how paperbark is shaggy. So I got curious and I completely girdled this one. And that bark is not a nutrient bearer, it's just a fluff, the nutrient cambium layers are inside it. I didn't hurt 'em but I burrowed it down to the wood. And Dad was walking through a day or so later and called us over at evening, "Did one of you boys do that to the paperbark up there?" I guess it's like Washington and the cherry tree, you know? (Chuckles) And he said, "Well, if you can't appreciate the woods, you can stay out of them for a month."

So I'd come home from school and there was a bird feeder at one end (of our property) and the rabbit hutches at the other end. Oh, surely after a week he'll relent. Oh, two weeks, no. Three weeks, no. Thirty days later he said, "Do you think you can take care of the woods now?" And it was a turning point. So, looking back, a very effective father.

HY: Where did you attend school?

LG: Lincoln [School], Stevenson [Intermediate School], Roosevelt [High School], UH [University of Hawai'i]. It was the old English-standard syndrome. Which people have faulted because it favored the Haoles, but which, looking back on, I think was a good idea because the Orientals and others who could handle standard English, we met fully a generation earlier than we would've. I remember going into first grade entrance and Miss Lewis, big Hawaiian lady, showed me a spool of thread and if I had said "tread" I would have gone to Ka'ahumanu [School], but I said "thread" so I went to Lincoln.

And, well, as an example in Roosevelt, one of the old guard teachers—I still don't know who it was, and Mother wouldn't tell me—called my mother up and said, "I think you should know that your son is going around with a lot of Orientals."

And my mother said, "Well, what is it that you teach him?" And she [the teacher] told her. My mother, she said, "That's what you do. You teach him that and keep your nose out of his business." (Laughs) She told me that anyway.

So, as I say, Paul Yuen, at UH he was a classmate of mine, I was in absolute awe of him. We were in a math class together and he always knew the answers and I didn't know any of them. Dewey Kim was a classmate. Would not have happened, I think, without the English-standard school system.

And then at one point my brother was student body president at Roosevelt. He'd won the territorial oratorical contest and he was a National Merit Scholar. And it was depression days. Punahou [School] called my mother and offered Tom a scholarship and her retort was—she knew neither of us would go near Punahou. They had a 5 percent Oriental quota in those days, that was all, and we knew it. She knew there was no point in even considering it. But what she told Punahou was, "What's the matter, can't you raise your own leaders?"

HY: Why did you have that feeling about Punahou? Maybe you can elaborate on that.

LG: Well, I wouldn't stand for that kind of a racial discrimination. It just wasn't our way. And it was a 5 percent quota and I'm gonna be part of 95 percent—forget it. I much more enjoyed the ones that my teacher was upset about my going around with. I'm glad I stayed in Hawai'i for school, too, through the UH.

But one of my scout parents at Pālāma, Mitsuma Miyasaki, he was from Lāna'i. He'd been an ILWU [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union] agent. And he'd, in Hawaiian Pine[apple Company], worked himself up so he's now in a supervisory level, non-union, so he could eat in the boss's cafeteria, and he was my favorite parent for the Pālāma troop which we had, troop thirty-eight I guess it was, and I was supervising the scout master.

And he said, "Tell me something, I've been hearing this in the Dole cafeteria, the reason that you and your brother are at such odds with the establishment is that they wouldn't let you in Punahou, is that right?" That's the only thing the Haole management could think of as a reason, it must be that kind of a reason.

I laughed. We're very much public school, all of Tom's kids, except Ivan, the geology professor in Puerto Rico, he went to UH lab school [University Laboratory School]. All the others are Lincoln, Stevenson, Roosevelt. And my niece, who lives in Hilo, from the fourth grade was taking Mandarin, and at Stanford [University] she majored in Mandarin and journalism.

And Punahou is different today, no question about it. I've met some really fine kids from it. Still, JM Tanaka, do you know him? Contractor, big contractor back in the 19[40]s and 19[50]s. He waited three years to get his kid into Punahou on the quota system, and he got the boy in. And JM used to drive up to the gates of Punahou in his contractor's truck, splattered with paint and whatnot, after a few weeks the boy asked him if he couldn't drop him a little further from the school so he could walk. Everybody else had Cadillacs or whatnot and Tanaka said, "This is not what I sent you there for." He yanked him out and put him back in public school. (Chuckles)

And Dr. [Yutaka] Osumi, a dentist, issei, sincerely thought he was doing the best thing he could for his kids, and he put [his daughter] Dorothy into Punahou and she went through. She went on to Bryn Mawr [College], and came back home, and her Punahou classmates were too busy for her. And she just was out of the social [circles]—I'm talking late 19[40]s. "Why did you do this to me?" she asked her dad. And he, first generation, [felt that it was the] best school on the island, best thing for her.

She eventually married the first nisei to graduate from Annapolis and they're living in New England. These things were very big in our lives. Kids today don't know anything about it.

Well, I don't know if they do, but it was bigger in our lives than I think it is today. So it was very important. I can remember how furious Tom was. He was a freshman here at the U [university] when the war hit. And he was in ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps]. Well the ROTC gets put into the Hawai'i [Territorial] Guard, the Hawai'i Guard puts into the National Guard, the National Guard put into the [U.S.] Army and they go off to the South Pacific. I remember him coming home and so furious because all the nisei classmates had been screened out. Had to form the VVV [Varsity Victory Volunteers] and so on and so on. So it's always been a big, a big element in our lives.

So one of Tom's [sons], Eric, married a Hawaiian, actually he married two of 'em, divorced the first girl, married a Hawaiian gal now, a lovely Hilo lady.

HY: Is this your nephew?

LG: Yeah, yeah, the one in the unions. Timmy, the lawyer, who's in Berkeley, [California], he married Filipino girl, Connie Chun's daughter. Hunky [Chun] and the [family of] runners. So anyway they're in Berkeley, and May is probably one of my favorite granddaughters, or whatever she is—my niece-in-law. Ivan, who's now in Puerto Rico—his first wife was a Korean girl he went to school with, Shellie Choy, Duke Choy's daughter. While he was in New Orleans he was a professor at New Orleans and Shellie Choy felt that it was not good and finally split up with him. And both Ivan and my sister-in-law said the really bad thing about that divorce was losing the in-laws, losing Duke and Mary Choy, [but] they never lost them, they stayed family friends.

HY: Were there teachers at Roosevelt or Stevenson or Lincoln that influenced you in some way? I mean that stand out?

LG: There's always a . . .

HY: Or even other students, for that matter.

LG: There's always somebody in that role.

HY: I mean, you picked social work as your . . .

LG: No, I came into engineering.

HY: Oh, okay.

LG: And I switched to political science. My B.A. is in government. Then I went into social work. We had too many lawyers already, namely one.

(Laughter)

LG: And I wanted to work with people and make some changes. And in a neighborhood like Pālana you can see the changes. The political scene you only sort of look twenty years down the tube. The most influential person was Dr. Saunders up here at the UH. Allan Saunders, you probably know of. I majored in Saunders. I didn't care what he was teaching, I took it. And he was very Socratic in his teaching method.

Dick [Richard H.] Kosaki, who should've been [UH] president, if they'd not chosen [Albert J.] Simone. He's out of the loop. But anyway, Dick Kosaki in Dr. [Edmund] Spellacy's constitutional law class, we'd all wait because he'd be going on and on and on, and about the last five minutes of the lecture, Dick would say, "Is not the essence of what we have studied today, thus, and so," and he'd go right to [the point], very succinct. So we'd all wait for Dick. We didn't take many notes until he talked (laughs). But Saunders was really a great influence.

Elementary school: I had a situation where [there were] largely old maid teachers, and all I had to do was bat my eyelashes and they would melt. And they got fed up with me. I was always behind the piano. My dad, for the first three years—I guess it was, because Dad didn't have any work, Mother was [with] the newspaper—Dad would pick me up before lunch. I suppose I couldn't afford a school lunch but I didn't know it. So he'd come to the classroom, take me home, we'd have lunch, then we'd clean house, played games and such. But he'd always come to the door, see my chair was empty, look behind the piano where I'd normally been put an hour into the school day for talking all the time. (Chuckles) And the teacher who didn't fall for that was my first married teacher, who was in sixth grade, and she had her own kids. And she had some problems, but she traumatized me for math.

HY: Do you remember her name?

LG: Oh yeah, Watson. Mrs. Watson always wore a big, floppy hat when we were out in the garden. Was always in the broom closet sprucing up her face, or trying to. (Chuckles) But we had this arithmetic problem of year, month, week, day, and you have to convert to get the answer, subtract so many years. I had been talking, and so I didn't know what those abbreviations, Y, M, W, D were, and she got real ticked with me so she ridiculed me, and I just [LG demonstrates he's shrinking] like that, and the rest of the class laughed at me. I didn't learn any math after that. And all the way through intermediate and high school I had to take every math course over. And I still went into engineering . . .

HY: You still wanted to go into engineering?

LG: Yeah, I wanted to build that big dam they're building now on the Yangtze [River]. That was a big thing, I was going over there and help do it. I've since been over there and looked at it.

In order to get out of engineering I was taking remedial, repeating my courses. And Dr. [Stanmore] Townes, big farm boy from Oklahoma, in the old Gilmore Hall, demonstrated to me that math and algebra, et cetera, were systems of logic and they had certain rules. And you apply the rules and the answers come out. All this time I thought it was magic. I didn't know how Paul Yuen always knew the answers in high school. (Laughs)

So I had a 1.4 [grade point average] in my first semester, which put you on the conditional. I got a 1.6 in my second semester and got out of it. [Then] went into social studies and got a 3.8, found my niche. I still got an F outstanding on my transcript. (Laughs) Aw, shucks.

So I'm very tolerant of kids who get into college and find a shift. They're supposed to open doors for you. You need the time. Dean [Wilfred J.] Holmes was here, broke his word to me, he told me way back that my math would satisfy half of my science requirements since I took psychology for the other half. Came to my last year and he said, "I never said that." Well, he had said it. So I had to go into freshman science. I had a geologist who was reading his notes

from the last twenty years, I understand. [He] told the dumbest jokes, they were freshmen jokes, and I didn't give him back what he wanted, so he flunked me.

Okay Gill, you gotta labor in the system, you want their grade, so you go back and take that class again, give him back all his stale humor, I got an A and got out. Took a strong chemical bath afterwards.

(Laughter)

LG: That was to get into the School of Social Work and they were very short of men, so they were willing to kind of waive the grade standards. And Jack [T.] Nagoshi [executive director of Pālama Settlement, 1962-64] and Tom Oyakawa and somebody from Maui and myself were the only men. And then very a influential professor was Harold [A.] Jambor, he had a real sense for community organization. And that's one of the better things I pulled off at Pālama, was community org. work and the Model Cities for the Pālama neighborhood. Harold Jambor was a mentor on that case.

I know in my high school, et cetera teachers, Faye Wren McCartney, Spanish, ninth grade. I'm the world's greatest procrastinator, and when we had an epidemic or something in town, measles or whatever, Mother would keep us home. Whether that was smart or not, I don't know—getting chicken pox when I was eighteen wasn't fun. So we have our lessons and we sent our lessons back and I was late with my papers back to Spanish class, so I got this. . . . Do you speak Spanish at all?

HY: *Un poco.*

LG: On the top of my papers, *Por la calle de después se va a la casa de nunca. Por la calle*, by the street, *de después*, of later, *se va*, one comes to, *la casa*, the house, *de nunca*, of never. (Laughs) Never forgot it. And that is the genuine concept of *mañana* as I've learned it. In the meso-American cultures, you're gonna die, everybody's gonna die, you don't know when, but you're gonna die. And there may or may not be an afterworld or whatnot, they have varying opinions on that, but you're definitely gonna die. So if there's something that you have to do that is very onerous, and you really don't want to do it, and you don't quite have to do it yet, don't do it. You may not have to do it. Well, it isn't procrastination, it's just, maybe I'll die before. I think that's great. (Chuckles) Strictly that. Well anyway, that's college and such.

Here on campus, the cosmopolitan club—I'd like to think I can take some credit for our having the East-West Center here. And that's kind of a remote stretch, but we formed a group for the foreign students back in '48 or so. Kenji Yamaguma, fine guy, he was going into international law and such. Agnes Niyekawa, who's retired from here, [there were a] number of us. They had about ninety students. (They were) from Iran and Lebanon and Malaysia and Taiwan and the usual, Japan and France and Germany. Siegfried Ramler who was at Punahou, one of our members. He was a simultaneous translator at the Nuremburg trials in Germany. Anyway, this club of local students and foreign students had lot of good fun together, and I took 'em hiking, of course. Tadao Yamaoka, whose family (owns) the biggest diesel engine works in the Orient [tape inaudible] was one of our kids. We lobbied and got a non-credit conversational English course set up under Elizabeth Carr for foreign students. We also lobbied the administration and got the English requirement postponed to anytime in the four years. You didn't have to do a two-year set, because that's what they're all failing—well,

passing the math and flunking the English.

And then we lobbied Dean [Willard] Wilson for a foreign student advisor. Only about thirty-five hundred students on campus and he had three counselors, and he said, "I can't give one to just ninety students." You can give half of one, can't you? So Agnes Niyekawa and I sat in his office. Whenever we weren't in class, we were sitting in his office and we would greet him, [and] he would greet us. And we'd gone in, we got to know the secretary real well. We carried that on for a week and he relented and he assigned Jimmy [James] Miyake half-time foreign student advisor.

Miyake went off later to Saigon, [South Vietnam] and Bangkok, [Thailand], and made rows in international circles of foreign student advisors, made pretty good name. We were trying to get an international house. We wanted to buy this one up here that the Baptists have now as a dorm. We never did get an international house dormitory. But when the state department was going to locate the East-West Center, they looked at Harvard [University], at Ann Arbor, Michigan, and UC [University of California,] Berkeley and at us. And we had more programs in place for the sake of foreign students than anybody else did. So there are some good times in those years.

And then there was a fraternity. Before the war it was known as Hakuba Kai and of course they closed down during the war, and then they reopened as Sigma Lambda. And it was the campus elites. Most of the ASUH [Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i] guys and so on. And I remember (Osamu) Murata saying, "We're reforming a Japanese fraternity and we'd like you to join." I was in—the middle of my third year [of Japanese]. *Sensei* said he'd pass me if I wouldn't sign up for anymore.

(Laughter)

LG: Oh, these Pacific area translators were getting easy grades. And I learned the *katakana* and *hiragana* in forty-eight hours, bingo. Just in order to swim. So Shunichi Kimura and I were asked to join, and we did. You stayed a member if you did community service. You had to do so much community service each month. And we thought that was pretty good. And these guys were fully capable of it.

Well Dr. [Arthur] Marder, our history professor, was advisor and he turned their heads and convinced them they were the campus elite and they should be black-balling people they didn't want and they didn't [fulfill] service requirement and whatnot. So Shunichi and I were in that fraternity for about six weeks, I think. We cashed in—forget it. So I don't really care for the fraternity state of mind. But that was going to be a service club and that was okay.

So there are real good reasons for going to school here. Even though they say it makes you too insular, I've never been away from the islands more than two and a half months in my life. And I've been all over the world. (Chuckles)

HY: Did journalism cross your mind?

LG: Not really. I write well, always got A's in my English comp[osition], but no. Architecture did. Mother counselled me into engineering because of her experience with architects during depression, so at least an engineer can still make a living. My dad said, "Well, engineers make

it strong, architects design it to be beautiful and then they make it strong."

But anyway. And social work, again, was only a means to an end, which was making a dent on things in Hawai'i. I know I made a dent on things in the Pālama area. I [made] a dent on a few lives. And a dent, perhaps, in the settlement services. I was basically, I think Jack Nagoshi and I, in sequence, were responsible for moving it from the poor man's YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] to effective delinquency-prevention family treatment.

HY: How is it that you initially got involved in Pālama Settlement?

LG: As a student. No, no, I was a camp counselor.

HY: Right. Then how did you . . .

LG: Winnie [Winifred] Ishimoto, who I mentioned was camp director, and she prevailed on me to come try and be a counselor for two months. She needed two weeks, and so I did. And that's when it struck me that the method works. And so I don't know whether I asked, or they wanted to assign or place the students in [their] second year of social work. And those days at any rate, (in your second), you did three days in the field and two days in class. So I was assigned to Pālama Settlement. And Maki [Makiko] Ichiyasu was my supervisor, who told me later that she was about to flunk me. I didn't hand in my reports in on time, but she liked the work I was doing with the kids.

And so right after that student year I just stayed on staff. I was director at. . . . It's a matter of attrition.

HY: Were you around during the—what was it?—Arne Larson [controversy].

LG: Uh, yes I was. He was director [1959-62]. He got fired.

HY: What was your take on that?

LG: He deserved it. He was a cheat. His wife was impossible. Arne acted like he meant well, but, he even had the people who lived (there) down on the settlement. . . . Originally, do-gooders went and settled in a poor neighborhood because [they] didn't have any transportation. They became part of the neighborhood. That's the Hull-House [and] Henry Street beginnings. We've always had staff living at Pālama, who can expect beating on the door at two A.M. if somebody needs 'em.

And so Arne was living there in the director's apartment, and their washing machines take quarters, which is an income for the settlement. Well he had his all painted red that were slugs so he could use them and get 'em back, and use 'em and get 'em back. Picky, picky, picky, penny ante kind of stuff.

Doctor Shunzo Sakamaki, deceased, historian here, was on our board [of trustees] for many, many years, and both times they had to fire a director, he was the president who had to fire the director, poor guy. (Chuckles) He had shingles. He fired Larson, I forget who the other one was he had to fire.

HY: Was that earlier—Eileen Watkins [executive director 1949-51]?

LG: Yeah, she was before my time. Oh, [Dearon J.] Shetanian. I think he's the one, had to be fired. There was a fellow, again before my time, very short lived, who didn't believe in trophies or whatnot. We had this big case in the foyer, half a dozen shelves [of] trophies going back to 1904, which really meant something. [He] just trashed 'em all. And so Nelson Kawakami, the one who taught 100,000 kids to swim, dug 'em all out of the rubbish, wrapped 'em up in newspaper and took 'em home. And the kids basically stopped coming to the settlement. The older guys anyway, they just kind of went on strike. And Shetanian got fired, I'm sure that's the one. And Nelson brought the trophies back and they're all back up on the shelf, and the kids came back. (Chuckles)

Pālama endures, regardless of the staff. We've had a few bummers, not many on the staff, but they can't shake the culture that is there in that neighborhood for that institution. And it really belongs to the people, everyone has an investment in it. It's a safe haven. I go in today—well I haven't for a while—but if I just walk in, it's friendly. You must be there for a good purpose. Everybody from the little kids to the *tūtūs*, it's friendly, it's warm, it's always been that way.

HY: You mentioned earlier that parental involvement was limited.

LG: Well, in my experience it was limited. But in my tenure, that camp experience was a real eye-opener as to how much the parents cared for their kids and what they would do [for] their sake if they had some direction and sponsorship. I had some of those parents on my camp advisory committee down the line. I would get word from them occasionally about something that they'd heard from their kids that they knew had happened, and I'll look into some of them.

HY: How much interaction did you have with some of the programs? Well, of course as a director, you oversaw things, but earlier did you interact a lot with some of the other programs?

LG: At the settlement? Yeah, you sort of needed to. When I came on they had an athletic department which had its own director. And we had the group work department where I was, which did clubs, and classes, and arts and crafts kind of things, drop-ins. But mainly clubs around age ranges that were geared at social development, and that's a very effective program. And group work around the camp. And we had a music school, that was John Kelly, who was kind of a thing unto itself. But the kids were frequently in all of them. And when we had a serious situation we'd have the staff from all the departments. We had a preschool, a kindergarten, that didn't get involved and the other things.

I remember we had this girl who was retarded, mentally challenged, whatever you call it today. And she was just not handling Likelike School. And so we had a case conference on her and I remember wondering who had last had contact with [the girl], Petronia. Hooulu Cambra [was] a *kumu hula* and she said, "Oh, I think I probably did, she just bit me yesterday. She [the girl] just ran wild through the music program. And so we did get a school conference going and we got things lined up and I brought in Clorinda Lucas, Nainoa Thompson's grandmother, who went over to the school and sat on them, and they stayed sat. She came back and lectured me and said, "Don't you ever let anyone like that go this long again." And they tuned up those [people who would work with the girl]—the secretary had a role, the principal had a role, the teacher had a role, and things were clear [as to] who was going to

discipline [the girl] and who was going to teach her and who was going to [do] what. And she made some progress. We certainly were not in our little isolated corners. That was a very effective thing. That's why we were kind of hard on the caseworkers, because you call up a kid's family worker and [the caseworker would say] that problem was taken care of. The hell it was. He was sitting on our steps at 9:30 last night! And we had to take him home and put him up for the night.

HY: Was that something you would do? You would actually [take home kids having problems].

LG: I never took anybody home, but staff that lived on the grounds could put a kid up for the night if they couldn't take him to his own home. In this case, they couldn't. There was a surrogate mother, she's still alive, May Kahae. She and Sam [Kahae] adopted, they never had children, but they adopted Poncho and Martin. Martin's living on Moloka'i. He ran for OHA [Office of Hawaiian Affairs], but they coached the teams, Sam coached the team the boys were playing in. And any kid that was in trouble could flop at the Kahae's down out at Akepo Lane.

And I remember Walter Rodrigues in big trouble and May told his mother, "Let him stay with us for a while. I'll see he goes to school. I'll see he does his homework." And Walter lived with the Kahaes for about two months, went back home, he was okay. Got over the hump. So, in a situation like that, I would have felt perfectly free to call up May and say, "Got any more room on your floor?" That's using your neighborhood people. If today, I didn't have family and close friends, and I was destitute, I'd go knock on May's door and (laughs) she'd take me in. Her husband had his sixtieth birthday at Susannah Wesley [Community Center]. He died shortly after that and there must have been 300 people there, his kids. (Laughs) Lots of wonderful people.

HY: Now when you were director there, did you live on the property?

LG: No no. I've always lived at home. The whole settlement house idea was really. . . . Well, it went when you got modern transportation. The . . .

HY: Is there a philosophy that kind of went along—shifted to?

LG: Shifted not really in principle. Jane Addams and the settlement house founders—settlement houses existed in England, before they did in the U.S. And when Jane Addams saw the sweatshop conditions and the abuse and exploitations of the immigrants, it was middle class, or wealthy do-gooders, who bought a place in the midst of the ghetto and moved in. And then sent their kids to the neighborhood schools and did their own knocking on doors. And having connections with the society structure, they could get things for the neighborhood that the local people couldn't get. And that was the settlement house deal, and you could do that best by living there 'cause you really couldn't commute. And Pālama was that way in its early days. I think they still have some staff living on the grounds now and they're part of the neighborhood.

Settlements are, in the U.S. at any rate, the ancestors of social work. Virtually all the innovative programs have been started by settlement houses, because in the reality situation, you've got to do something that works. I think we started the first preschool, down at the old place—you know, Pālama Junction, where it used to be. Did the first public recreation. In fact,

my dad was the architect for their gymnasium with the swimming pool in the basement at which the rich guys said, "Those people should be working. What are you doing?" And then they had the first public housing, model tenements, they called them, on Akepo Lane, rental. And they had the first showers, showers for working men [who] had no showers [at home]. Come over here and take a bath and go home. They had a pure milk clinic or depot where they issued milk. They had the first VD clinics. They started the visiting nurse program. The public health nurses that came out of that. Pālama [visiting nurse program] covered the island until 194[3]. The poor girl's Fernhurst was our girls dorm, there was a need for outer-island girls [who] couldn't afford things and wanted a safe place to stay. Group work in terms of clubs designed to aid personal and social development, we started that. In my time, we started the—what was it called—GGI, guided group interaction. It was based on a program that we knew about in San Francisco. And it was an alternate to incarceration, and the kids had to come every day to it in a group and talk about their problems and not phony up 'cause the other kids knew what they were doing.

So, family court could give the choice of, you go to Ko'olau [Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility] or you go to Pālama for the GGI program. And kids who wanted to change would come to Pālama. Kids who did not want to change, were scared of it, they knew we would change them and they'd go to Ko'olau instead. [It] took a lot of special training of staff to go up and—I started that. Pop Warner, the use of football for scholastic enhancement [i.e., Pakōlea program]. All the kids want to play football. The girls, they all wanted to be cheerleaders. So, Pālama had cheerleaders coming out of its ying yang. . . .

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 27-34-1-97; SIDE ONE

LG: You're on?

HY: Sure.

LG: Okay, we tied the Pop Warner program into the study hall and personalized tutoring. And so, we would test the kids if we couldn't trust the school records. And finding their weak area in school, we would design a work program. They didn't have to have a teacher or anybody. They just had to go through the book and do so many pages in their area, whether it was English, whether it was math or what not. Then they could get a chit from the teenage supervisor of the reading room. They had to go upstairs. They'd take that to the locker room, then they could suit up to practice. If they didn't do their homework, or if they didn't have any homework, didn't do what the program designed for their weak area, they couldn't suit up and practice. And you miss three practices, you couldn't play that weekend. And the motivation is tremendous.

And then the kids who made a 90-yard run, would get a gold star on his helmet and the kid who got A in his algebra would get a gold star on his helmet and the kid who had perfect school attendance would get a gold star on the helmet (laughs). And the other kids didn't know what was going on. The other teams, they looked at us and they'd see these guys with all these [stars] and imagine they were all runs or something. (Laughs) Formidable.

And we kicked out one of old Pālama boys who was teaching the kids to play dirty. And plain just toed the line with him—get out of here. And our kids developed a reputation for clean sportsmanship, still have it. Cleanest players in the league. And I remember one Samoan kid who's really a sweet boy and never made any trouble for his teachers, and they just kind of graduated him along. He was ninth grader reading at the third grade level. So, (we) put him into this [program] and in two months we had him up to within a month or two of what his reading level is supposed to be. Look at his motivation.

HY: Now, was this just with the Pop Warner [program]?

LG: Yeah.

HY: And so the other activities, were they checked [to see if homework was done] . . .

LG: Well, Pop Warner is where we started it, but they moved it into any league competition. I don't [think] they'd done it in swimming. You really don't need to. A swimmer is an extraordinarily motivated person. He's got that grueling regime that he has to put himself through.

HY: More with team sports?

LG: Yeah, they brought the same element into it. And the study hall's quite sophisticated now and they've got computers and bunch of stuff and they've named it for somebody who gave them money. I haven't been up to see it. When they moved the building to where it is today, they renovated it inside. That whole big thing is a learning center up top. So, it's very, very effective use of the kids' own incentive motivations.

They're not using the camp to the extent that I wished they would. And the main reason is we don't have a mess hall up there. So, it's used by small groups going up for their own purposes, but it's not the treatment program that I made it into and that Pat Murata carried on as camp director up there. That was a window when the camp was being used very, very effectively. And I can't say that it's not, but summer programs are a little different now.

And they've gone now into senior citizen [programs] and serving lunches and things. And again the settlement has to meet whatever the needs are, and the needs keep changing as the community changes and the population changes. All the old properties were owned by Hawaiian families largely, but were bought out by Chinese who rented to Japanese who since moved out and the Filipinos came in and they're moving out and the Samoans in—so, you change your program. The caretaker of the grounds is a Samoan [who] is doing a fabulous job, finally making the place look good.

HY: This is currently?

LG: Yeah. We started a program during the Model Cities era . . .

HY: This is like a . . .

LG: Pre-[President Richard] Nixon. He killed it (laughs).

HY: So, the late [19]60s.

LG: Yeah, I guess. Model Cities took all kinds of forms. In Chicago, [Illinois], they were simply a federally funded coordinator who sat in Mayor [Richard] Daley's office and had no power whatsoever. Here in the islands, in Honolulu and in Wai'anae, particularly in Honolulu, Kalihi, Pālama, we saw it—and this is partially my political science background—as an opportunity to teach or enable the people to learn the machinery of government and how to make things happen on their own behalf.

And a number of us, the minister of Aldersgate [Methodist Church], Jim [James] Swenson; Wayne Protheroe, who I think is dead now, was with the city; myself; Arthur Akinaka, who, if he's not dead, he nearly is. He's a Kalihi-Pālama community council engineer, former city engineer. Chief Leimanu Fuifatu Fauolu was a talking chief and a *matai* in the Mayor Wright [Homes] housing. Former newspaper man in Pago Pago, [who could] sit right down at my typewriter and whack it out in Samoan, whack it out in English, no matter what. And with the federal monies that were being funneled—I forget how it handled in the city's administration, but we designed these large tracts based on census tracts, and the people in those areas got to elect their own representatives to the Model City congress which met in the old OR&L [O'ahu Railway and Land Company]. And that congress met once a month and no program with federal monies could be initiated in the target area unless that congress approved it. And it had input.

And I can remember all these eggheads from the university who thought they could get some kind of grant and do their own pet thing on studying the poor folk. And they'd have to come down and explain it to the poor folk, and it didn't always pass. And one of my favorite people was Lena Reverio who was a mother in [Ka'ahumanu Homes], the one that is across from Farrington [High School], it's been renovated now. Her husband was in jail and she was diabetic, she since died, sixth grade education. She was head of the—not a PTA, but a children's thing in there. Anyway, they elected her [to the Model Cities congress].

She didn't trust me for two years, you know Haole boy. But when she finally did, she told me what her strategies were. She'd sit in on those meetings and she'd listen to the eggheads and she'd be taking notes and then she'd call for a recess. And she'd go in the john, lock the door and sit on the throne and consult her dictionary and figure out what the hell the guy had said.

(Laughter)

LG: And then she'd come back after the recess and she'd make a very eloquent speech. Lena was so quiet before the recess and she says such sensible things after the recess (laughs). Wonderful person. Oh, by the way. They got screwed by one of their own neighbors, Charlie [Charles] Kauhane, the same one who upset my brother's coalition in the House of Representatives. He got himself elected chairman of his congress and he recessed a meeting. He didn't end it, he recessed it. And he wouldn't reconvene it, and six months things were going down the tube.

Residents have got to realize they're being screwed, and I could talk to a few people about it, but nothing I could do about it. Finally, Arthur Akinaka, who represented the blue collar Kalihi nisei population and Chief Fauolu, who was highly respected by the housing community as well as the Samoans, they got together and Arthur told me, "We'll go see Charlie

[Kauhane]. You get the Chief to move it and I'll second it and we'll dump him. But Hawaiian style, we gotta go talk to him first." So, then talked to Charlie and told him (they) had the votes and what they were going to do.

And so the meeting was resumed, there must have been a hundred people in the room. I was way in the back. I'm just a fly on the wall and Charlie's getting the shaft and he's the indomitable politician 'till the end. He's a Pālama boy. Anyway, he says, "Gill, I want you to know I was a Pālama boy." Everybody looked at me and I said, "Yeah, Charlie. Before my time."

(Laughter)

LG: I'm not responsible for you. Well, 'cause we knew each other politically. So, anyway that [Model Cities] was going along until Nixon killed it.

OEO [Office of Economic Opportunity] had come in earlier and my brother was the director for that. And the first three projects of OEO were in Pālama, two of them were ours, one of them was. . . . And that's not nepotism, that's just the fact we were in there, bingo. And one was down at Saint Elizabeth's [Episcopal] Church. OEO got killed. People weren't really trusting. "Why we get all involved, what good's it going to do? They're going to pull the rug." Well, Model Cities was pretty good for a while and they pulled the rug.

There's a far-right talk radio, KTRG. All the rabid guys, mostly Haoles, mostly Mainland. (Laughs) Sorry, but it's true. [They thought that] Model Cities was a communist plot. And the government is going to give the people at Kūhiō Park Terrace bulldozers and they're going to try to scare the small property owners around them. And they're going to change the neighborhood and all this kind of stuff.

So, we're holding the first organizational meeting at Farrington and Jim Swenson, the minister, was going to moderate how we're going to handle this. Well, first I called for some police be on hand. 'Cause KTRG, you hear 'em on the radio, "Go to that meeting and out vote and call and vote it down." So, okay. When you sign in, [you were asked,] "What's your address?" It was out of the area, we gave them certain colored card. It was in the area, we gave them different colored card. And all the in-the-area people got to sit in the middle. And all the out of the area people were on the sides.

And then the heckling began. And we had Pālama people standing up and saying, "What the hell's the matter with you? You don't live in this area. This isn't your problem. We've got these conditions, right? Go home. Get out of here. Go." We've got the police in the door, okay. Meeting went well, we organized, we passed it, got the thing rolling. Closing up the auditorium, went out back [to] the basketball court and there were twenty other policemen out there (laughs). Well somebody was thinking—more than I was! And it went on.

One of the programs that we funded under it was an auto repair class for Samoans.

HY: Specifically for them?

LG: Yeah, well it's by them. [A service station] had charged some Samoan forty, fifty dollars to basically reconnect a loose wire. And they were real ticked. Chief Fauolu organized a bunch of

'em. We set up a class on auto mechanics, in what later became our preschool, or had been our preschool. Yeah, we had to give it up because [the preschool was a] wooden building [and was a] two-story fire hazard.

And I remember sitting in in the evenings and hearing all the Samoan carburetor, all the Samoan ignition (laughs). And so they began a *hui* fixing their own and each others cars. And their own lot took all the business away from [the service station]. Another thing that we did under Model Cities—I'm pretty sure it was, it was our grant—we needed to know what the Samoans were facing, and why they were always in trouble with the police and so on. And we hired Fay and Vaiao Alailima. Now Vaiao had been a minister of. . . some government minister at any rate in Western Samoa. Had his master's in political science. They did in-depth, half-day interviews with fifty some odd Samoan families. Several of whom they were related to. And very, very fine schedule of questions that had been passed by—I don't know who in the university had helped then with it, anthropologists, psychologists all kinds of stuff. And they basically ascertained the immigrant Samoan is like any other immigrant. Highly motivated, highly desirous of education for his kids, moved here to go up in the world. If they're living in Mayor Wright's they wanted to get away from the *matai* system. If they want to be in the classical system, they go to Lā'ie. Then Los Angeles ones and Honolulu ones are the freeseekers.

Under obligation to their families, if somebody or a relative comes up they gotta put them up. Mayor Wright's is constantly on their backs 'cause the place is only for four people and you've got ten on the floor, but can't do anything else, obligation. You keep interpreting to the public housing [authorities]. The only thing that they really lacked was a sense of how to handle a money economy 'cause the old country was all barter economy and such. And why all the trouble with the cops?

Well, Fay Alailima put me onto it. Back in the early 1500s, the Tongans occupied Samoa for some twelve generations. Yeah, twelve generations and they wiped out the *ali'i*. And Samoa being mountainous had developed the same kind of hierarchical structure that Tahiti did, that Hawai'i did and so on. That's typical.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

LG: The only way they got rid of the Tongans finally is there was a dance, see. Well, they conspired at their *konohiki* level—do you understand the terms? And there was a famous dance, they still recreate it in Samoa where they buried their weapons in the sand and they danced before the Tongan chief. And at the right moment, dug out the weapons and whapped him, and he and his court fled and cried back that we will never again come in anger and war.

And it was a famous freeing of Samoa, but they kept the governance structure of the councils, of the *konohiki* councils, where everybody gets his say. And you can earn your way up. It's the only society in Polynesia, traditional society, where you can earn your way into chieftainship. You couldn't in Hawai'i, you'd have to be born into it. So, the Samoan is used to having his opinion heard by his peers and is used to not being talked down to by a Hawaiian cop like some "dumb Samoan."

And the Samoan is very physical. First thing he's gonna do is whap you in the head. (Laughs) But it explains this is the only democracy that ever existed in precontact Polynesia. Well,

understanding all of these things had a lot to do with how we handled the Samoan kids or how we understood what their relations to their parents were and such. So, this is applied anthropology in the project, and we had some—I'm sure it was—federal monies for it.

HY: So, after you got this set of interviews, what do you do with that information, in terms of implementing . . .

LG: We shared it with other agencies. I presume it was published, but not professionally published, not out in a journal or anything. We've largely used it for ourselves and anybody else who had contact with that Pālama-Samoan community. We were probably more insular with it than we should have been, but then there was so much in it that was personal. These interviews were really in depth and we couldn't have carried it off if it hadn't been for native speakers who were related to the subjects.

Fay Alailima is the one who wrote the book, *My Samoan Chief*, in which she's writing about Vaiao. Wonderful. Fay's a scatterbrain, she's Ph.D. from the Mainland in political science, a real scatterbrain. Anyway, an example of a settlement assessing, recognizing current problems, not having an answer, knowing something has to be done and inventing the answer or the program—we're trying to at any rate. And that's typically the role of settlement houses.

That's why they're so much fun to work in. They're so really significant for you professionally. There's certainly nothing that's dull. And it's stressful. I'm very grateful 'cause they had a policy, you had to take your month's vacation as a month. You couldn't just bit and piece it. You had to take it because of the stress. Get out of here for a month. That's when I shipped my car to another island and spent a whole month on the island. Mud grips on my Volkswagen and a steel plate under the engine, exploring every place which has led to when I do other things. And then after three years, I think it was, you could take a second month without pay providing you left the islands.

So, when my dad died in January of '57 Mother was feeling it. They were twenty years apart. I said, "Hey, I can get two months this summer, let's go to Europe." So, I ordered a Volkswagen, picked it up in Germany, ten thousand miles, ten countries. And another time said, "Well, let's go around the world." Two months. Another time said, "Let's go to Japan." That's seven weeks in Japan, Bangkok and Hong Kong. So, I liked their vacation policy.

(Laughter)

LG: And when I went to Moanalua Gardens Foundation [MGF], and they said they wanted me, these were my requirements. You will have a medical plan, you will have an annuity retirement plan, you will let us join a credit union and we will have a month's vacation. I mean, what is it? Twenty-eight working days or something of that sort? We still have it. (Laughs) Staff today said "Ho, we got good benefits." I said, "Yeah, you bet you do."

HY: Why did you leave Pālama?

LG: Sixteen years is a long time in one place. The real gratifications are working directly with the kids and working with the families. And as you advance in supervision, you have to get your gratification from helping your workers work effectively. Knowing they're doing a good job

and you do a good job on them. You get up to be the director, you're working with department heads. And we had a staff of about sixty full and part time. And very little real direct contact except if you walk around the pool and talk to some of the old parents. So, not as satisfying as it had been, but then utter frustration with the AUW [Aloha United Way].

At that time, I won't speak for them now, but I haven't given them a cent since I left Pālama—hypocrites. The pace setter campaign that the Lowell Dillinghams of the world and whatnot would contribute to in advance of the campaign. My brother, when he was lieutenant governor, researched cities of comparable wealth and size. And our bigshots were giving less than twenty-five percent of the national norm. And they wouldn't let me keep our caseworker request or an outreach worker request in my budget. I had to do budgets five times a year. Five times a year.

I had my business office send me one [the budget] in Rome. It was in the Hotel Senato. I looked at it and it was all messed up and I told Mother, "We gotta go home." Fortunately, her arthritis set in and it was a good idea. So, by the time precampaign, you're being told this much we will put in the goals, and this we will not. And always, nine years of trying to get a caseworker back, after Janet Nakashima had been there on child and family service placement, she was an outreach worker for them, we got her back and I think I put her in Community Org[anization] with Shungo Okubo. These guys were saying the community can only get this much and they're only giving twenty-five percent. And I was right on the verge in '69, of going to Art [Arthur] Rutledge and say "Look, this is what they're doing to the poor folk in Pālama. Why don't you have all the Teamsters and all the hotel restaurant workers and whatnot refuse to give on-the-job pledge you make to take out of your salary. Why don't you just boycott them for a year? It'll hurt us. It'll hurt everybody, but they'll get a message." Well, I never did it. I left. I was not effective in getting us money.

[Robert] Higashino came in [as executive director of Pālama Settlement in 1970] and he went along with them and he jollied them and whatnot. He's an old friend of mine. And he got more money. So, it's a good thing that I left. Everybody has his time.

And what I did do in that decade, '69 to '79, was care for my mother who died in '79. Well, we went to New Zealand in a wheelchair in '75, so she was still moving around. But I started programs in conservation in the Sierra Club, a high school hiker program which is still going on in its twenty-seventh year. Groups in the different high schools, 300 kids a year who know the environment. Did some work to try and get environmental education into the school systems. That was very frustrating. This is why one of the first things we were able to get at Moanalua Gardens Foundation (was a) grant (from the MacArthur Foundation) for three-quarters of a million dollars. And we wrote the curriculum 'Ōhi'a Project which is a first ever and is still being used by about a third of the teachers. And we're keeping it updated. Bishop Museum has lost interest 'cause they don't have the money. When the dollar goes, they go too.

So, there were things to do in the [19]70s that were very important. And I didn't seek the job at MGF, they asked me to come on. And by then, they had defeated the highway [H-3] through the valley based on Gertrude Damon's recorded history from the old kamaāina. And the Department of Interior ruled that the historicity of Kamana Nui was sufficient. The highway had to go someplace else, unless there was no feasible prudent alternative. So, it went into a valley that had many more sites than Moanalua does, but doesn't have the recorded

history. So, they were kind of spinning their wheels and I saw an opportunity, a venue, to get into the schools in environment and cultural education. And we have a highly respected program. We've had three, four, now we're down to two, two and a half instructors who go into the schools who are doing contracts with teachers now. They'll help you [the teachers] for three years and train you and will assist you a little bit after that, but you're going to have to learn, can't keep depending us. We do the distance learning, TV broadcasts. The DOE [Department of Education] pays for it, but we do it.

We've designed fifteen field site packets throughout the islands that are teacher-proof, which is one step lower than being fool proof (laughs). Here's the route, here's what you take, here's the lesson you use in advance. Here's where you go. Here's what you're looking at. Here's the view plane. Here are all the names. They're so scared to do field trips. They don't want to do it wrong and they don't know. There are some wonderful teachers. Very good.

Really interesting because at Pālama we had an adversarial relationship with the schools. They were kicking our kids out and we were putting them back in—trying to—either for remedial work or—oh, we brought down a community worker from New York from Brooklyn, Black lady. Big, six foot and the pear build, you know? She came down to work with our Mayor Wright mothers, who had dropped out of school themselves, most of them, a lot of single mothers and whose kids were in trouble in school. And the schools threatening to drop the kids or suspend the kids. So, this big lady came down and said, "Easy." All those principals are little Japanese guys, right? Well, they weren't [all little Japanese guys], but most of them were. Because of the bias in the Big Five businesses, Orientals had no real way to rise in the [19]40s and [19]50s, except through education or nursing [which was] the only place they could go up. That's why the big Japanese concentration in the school systems. And no respectable issei mother on Kaua'i would allow her daughter to be anything but a teacher, *sensei*. Lot of reasons, but anyway.

Never go by yourself. This is the lady's lesson. You take at least three mothers and make sure you get the big ones. And you go down and you go in his office and he'll listen to you.

(Laughter)

LG: And our Mayor Wrights' mothers, they learned. They went down to Central [Intermediate] School and he listened. (Laughs) Why did I get on to that?

HY: Oh, now how is it that somebody brought somebody [from New York]. . .

LG: Oh, adversarial relationship. We had money, see, Model Cities. But now in MGF, we're not in an adversarial relationship. I'm not. We're greatly sought after. We come into the classroom walking on water—the great expert, and the teachers do everything that they can. Somebody gives you a lei. They get all the learning they can out of it, as well as the topic matter and then field trips.

We had a situation at Farrington. One of the boys had killed his father. The father was pistol whipping him. A long, long line of abuse, and the boy grabbed the gun—and I don't know, intentionally or otherwise. Everybody was very supportive of the boy, but you don't kill your father.

And so at school, the students were shunning him and the girls were tittering about him. And he'd been placed in a foster placement time out of the home, but he was still going back to Farrington. And I get this call from Joshua Agsalud—he's on our board at MGF now—vice principal, "Why are your boys, your Pālama boys, beating up so many of the kids behind the campus?"

[I told him,] "Why don't you check and see what the guys who got beaten up were saying about Freddy?"

HY: This is this kid?

LG: The kid who killed his father, yeah. I won't use his last name. So then this group of the toughest kids I ever had at the settlement, the Dukes . . .

HY: Was that a club name?

LG: That's a club name. They were Bobby Rath's original group. And I took 'em on later. They couldn't plan a day ahead. [They'd say,] "We gotta go camp this weekend." [I'd tell them that] this is Thursday, how you gonna do it? [They'd say,] "You go bring this stuff, okay?" No way. (Laughs) That's the kind I had, and they would hassle me. They were wonderful guys.

They met in the little room at the end of the hall. "We gotta do something for Freddy." And so they said, "You go this way in the hallway and when he goes from his class to this, you walk with him, okay?" And the next guys [said,] "And you walk with him this time. We do this for a week. We let him know we know him. You know, you put your arm on him." This is the way the kids were talking. It brings tears to my eyes really.

And then the second week, "We make sure he eats lunch with us. The Pālama boys will stick together." And they went on and on. Fourth week, when [they were] going [to] have moonlight picnic and then have Freddy come. It fell through because his probation officer wouldn't let him out after dark. But, man could they ever plan when it was important. Beautiful support. I suppose this was typically teenage, but this was also typically Pālama.

A camp success story: Dobo, Filipino-Japanese. Neither parents spoke English. Father was in the American navy and he met the mother in Japan. The house was mute. Talk about being culturally deprived. Dobo didn't talk. He would sit in the back of some of his friends. And they were outside of my window. They always kept our windows open, never had any air-conditioning. You talk to the kids right outside. They wanted a scholarship to go to camp. Well, some of them needed it, some of them need half or whatnot. Dobo had never been to camp. Dobo never smiled. Dobo just always watched everything. He was thirteen or so. Gave him full scholarship. He went up to Pālama Uka, two weeks, he only watched. He'd get into the volleyball, but he didn't know what to do and never did anything wrong, just didn't know what to do. Next summer, Dobo can smile now. He's outside my window again. I give him half scholarship. He earned the other half by selling sweetbread or something in the neighborhood. Goes to camp, has a ball, laughs, plays, so on. Third year, Dobo is outside my window again. "I no need, but my brother, Hank, he like scholarship. No, I can pay [for my own]."

I had a system when we rented the camp on weekends to outside groups, school groups or whatnot. I'd send one of my trusted junior leaders. We had kerosene pressure lanterns. We had to turn the heater on a certain way, all kinds of things I couldn't let our rental group do. So I had several boys who did this and Dobo was one of them.

I got this phone call, three miles down on the pineapple fields was this plantation phone. It's Dobo, "Kink, Kink, get fire, fire at the camp!" Now, Dobo? "Oh no, no. *Pau, pau* already, but bad." So, I went out there. And it was a Leilehua band had been camping there on the weekend. And they were going down to band practice and you're not supposed to smoke on the camp. This kid had thrown his cigarette on this dry, broom sedge grass and this patch had caught fire. And the fire's terminal up there.

"Dobo, what did you do?" He always used to say when I had him do something, "Wait, gotta *tink*." And he would *tink* and he'd do something.

He said, "I *wen tink*—what would Kink do [meaning me]? So, I went jump up and down, make plenty noise." And the teachers came and whatnot and with blankets and they put the fire out. So that's what he did. He jumped up and down and made plenty noise [because] that's what I did.

(Laughter)

LG: Fine, you saved the camp. I have a picture at an end-of-camp luau and he's probably one of the senior junior leaders. Got smiles as big as the all outdoors. He's got a lei. (Laughs) Yeah, we did that to him. Pālama's done that to lots and lots of people.

HY: Over the years that you were there, how would you profile the kind of problems that these kids had? And did they change over the years?

LG: Drugs. Yeah, got worse. I wouldn't want to be there now.

HY: Got worse?

LG: Well, our main problem was sniffing glue and sniffing paint. It's the kids on the other end of town, who could afford the marijuana. But you know, we had some kids rotting their brains out on paint fumes. School delinquency, parental . . .

HY: Was there at-home problems?

LG: Oh yeah, there are always at-home problems. To a degree. I'll give you a success story: Dorothy Lee Kwai. She was a Pālama girl. Her father used to have the *manapua* baskets. She's my age. She and Mel [Lee Kwai] moved into a corner of Mayor Wright housing. Dottie [Dorothy Lee Kwai] made it a point to meet the parents and families of every kid that her kids brought home. And she made it a point to meet everybody in her building. She kept her eye on things and she always told me [what was going on]. Fortunately she was on the corner. She wasn't immersed in the middle of the housing area. And [public] housing isn't as bad as it is made out to be.

There were some people in the middle with real strengths, too. Mary Ann Diaz who had her

sisters and cousins all around. And any one of their kids would get disciplined by anybody else. She had this court that was all related and a kid couldn't pull anything. So there were strengths. But Dottie---the oldest boy was Harry. He's in Oregon now, community television. This is a Chinese-Hawaiian family. He was her oldest son and he was her first teenager and he was her first problem.

And Dottie called me and said, "Harry's being disobedient." That's a kid we're using as a junior leader. He's a real role model for little kids.

"Well, Dottie, he's gonna test you. He's finding himself. He's growing up. He's very reliable over here. I wouldn't worry too much about him, but he's gonna test you."

Maybe three, four days later. We close at 9:30 and Harry was still there. He said, "I want to talk to you." So, he sat in my office. He said, "All the other guys are icing me, but I can't go along with them. They're doing things that I don't approve of." But, basically saying it's very lonely. But he said, "I'm so grateful that I have parents who taught me right from wrong."

I said, "Well, I think Harry what we can do is, we probably we need another coach for one of the Bantam leagues. That would give you something more to do." Figure a few more leadership tasks that Harry was up to, if he had time from his studies and so on. He liked that because he was not going to go around with his peers, who were car stealing and that stuff.

HY: He felt pressured.

LG: Oh yeah, most kids feel a lot of pressure. But he stood up to it. So about a week later, I saw his dad sitting on the wall of the swimming pool. I said, "Hey, Mel, I tell you something your boy told me." He cried. I got a phone call from the mom about a couple of hours later, she was crying. They never hassled the kid again.

But Harry went off to Idaho. Unfortunately had to get married. Stupid kid, but he stuck it out. And they got divorced. Everybody agreed it was a good idea. Married again. He's never come home, except to visit. So, I have four grandchildren. They call me Grandpa Kink. Professionally, you're not supposed to do this. They tell you you're not supposed to develop personal relationships with your clientele because you're going to move on. Well, yeah, if you're going to do three years and move on. Those textbooks don't know it.

So every spring break, I take my clan, the Lee Kwais from Oregon, and we go up to Timberline Lodge on Mount Hood---they'd given up trying to teach me to ski (laughs). His [Harry Lee Kwai's] wife and I sit by the fireplace and read a book while the kids are on the slopes. My oldest [surrogate] grandson, his boy by his first marriage, was going to go to Costa Rica with me next spring, but he can't do that. He's been there. He's written a guidebook on the beaches. And so I know the mountains---I go there quite a bit. And so I'll show you the mountains, you show me the beaches. But he couldn't get away from school. Anyway that was his success story.

They later moved from Pālama and went out and got a place, Pū'ōhala in Kāne'ōhe. And then he applied to the Camp Pocono thing and I wrote him a letter for that. And he got the Camp Pocono scholarship, and he was just a wonderful kid, straight out of the area.

They don't all work out that well. There were two boys that were peers. We spent an inordinate time on the one who went over the fence at O'ahu prison in the same week that the other one graduated with honors from Purdue [University]. We didn't spend too much time on him. We didn't need to. And the one who went over the [fence at the] prison later went back in prison and got killed in prison. So, down the drain.

Alan Howard and somebody [Ronald] Gallimore did this study in Nānākuli on child-raising practices of low-income Hawaiians. It's called *Nā makamaka o Nānākuli*. They lived in [Nānākuli] for six months. And it establishes [what] the anthropologists know, or cultural people know, that a kid's not supposed to shoot off his mouth. He's supposed to watch, he's supposed to listen. What is it? *Pa'a ka waha, hemo ka maka*? In fact that's always annoyed me when I've had school kids on my trips, little, middle class kids from East O'ahu talking before they're thinking. And the Hawaiian kid is supposed to observe and he's supposed to learn and then he can try. And if you make a wrong, people help them.

So, he goes into the first grade—he's not going to raise his hand. That's shining, but the other kids are raising their hands and they're getting recognized, and he wants that attention. And the only thing he can do is be naughty. And the teachers reinforce it—cute kid, big brown eyes, put him up on their lap [and say,] "Why are you doing that?" Oh he loves that. So he does some more of it. By the third grade, he's in the principal's office. By the sixth grade, he's stopped learning. Seventh, eighth grade, he's out. Got a record already.

So, we—the teachers, I think it was Nānāikapono [Elementary School], one of the teachers recognized this situation in her classroom. And she divided her sixth grade class into four teams. [Each team had] the same assignment, four different groups work at the same workbook, research, whatnot. The dumb kid did the coloring, a bright kid did the research, they all got the grade that was earned by that project. Ho! Terrific, they're helping each other instead of competing. The other teachers hated her, wasn't traditional, made more work for them.

But we checked on our Pālama graduates of Hawaiian background in O'ahu prison and virtually everyone had that same syndrome. Had stopped reading by sixth grade which is another reason for the Pop Warner business. So, we knew we had a problem. We had to design a program. Earlene Chambers was my program director, former nurse, wonderful person. She was actually the architect of a lot of these things.

HY: Piko, Earlene Piko?

LG: Yeah, Earlene Chambers Piko.

HY: I think we're going to run out of tape here.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 27-35-2-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Lorin T. Gill (LG)

Honolulu, O'ahu

November 25, 1997

BY: Holly Yamada (HY)

HY: November 25, 1997. This is the second session with Lorin Gill.

Okay, let's see. Last time we left off you were talking about—again you mentioned about why the incentive programs, like Pop Warner, to stay in school were. . . .

LG: Oh, that was from that *Nā makamaka o Nānākuli* evidence. Their reading levels and so on, yeah.

HY: I had a couple questions, I just wanted to backtrack a little bit. Earlier you had mentioned that when your brother was OEO director, you'd mentioned that there were three projects and two of them were under Pālama, and you mentioned . . .

LG: Three were in the neighborhood.

HY: You mentioned the auto repair for Samoans.

LG: No, that wasn't an OEO project.

HY: Oh, that wasn't? I'm sorry.

LG: That was something we did. I'd forgotten. One of our OEO things—I'm pretty sure was a Community Organization position, Janet Nakashima might be able to verify that, I don't want to be inaccurate—but I think that's when we hired Shungo Okubo. However, under the OEO, it was Community Action programs that you could apply towards. Saint Elizabeth's Church under Ed [Edwin] Bonsey did something on early preschool, pre-preschool, or something. Anyway, what we did do are things they'd long seen the need for us. We were armed for them. We didn't run out and invent something because it was some public money coming. Part of the frustration was the AUW not being able to fund. That was way before my dislike of them occurred. They were not able to fund, not able to fund, not able to fund. And then when I learned that they were only giving 25 percent of what they should have been giving, I could see why they weren't able to fund. But that was quite a while after these programs were in. I think these were in the early [19]60s.

HY: Were you program director then? You weren't executive director yet.

- LG: I was executive director [1964-69]. So, would have been close to that time. And [told] Jack Nagoshi [executive director, 1962-64] when he left I would help.
- HY: So, when you say that these were things that you had long recognized the need for, maybe you could elaborate on that.
- LG: One was an outreach worker, and I'm not sure it was under the Community Action program, though I know our AUW request had been for outreach worker for some seven or eight years, nine years. And that's simply because, as much as a magnet you try to make the grounds and the activities, it doesn't draw everybody in. And there're kids out on the corner who feel the place belongs to somebody else or they don't want to submit to even the lightest regimes of behavior, because we would suspend the kid if he broke too many rules or was too inconsiderate. So, you would have somebody to go out and hang around at midnight on those corners. And that's long recognized as a need in the Kalihi area. I think the Kalihi YMCA did get a worker of that sort. But it's a typical program, a typical approach. And then you get the kids—they're not ready to make that step themselves you have to go out and help them make it. So, that's always been a need. And several of our staff and myself included, when we were actual workers, would do a lot of neighborhood circulating, but it wasn't our principal job. We had also groups that were coming to the agency that we worked with. The Community Organization idea—I guess philosophically because School of Social Work and Harold Jambor, who had a quite an influence on my thinking. . . . And you see a neighborhood where people are not in any sense in control of their destinies, they're not able to know the ropes to make the demands on a program for which they are eligible to the extent that someone of more education would do. They need to learn how. That's why the Model Cities offered such an opportunity to learn the ropes. The poor neighborhood knows ropes that the middle class neighborhood doesn't know anything about, but they're not the same ropes at getting the goodies that the middle class neighborhoods can get. So, Community Orgs [Organizations] are just another way of enabling a community to realize its own interest and so it's always a need.
- HY: Did you have a relationship with law enforcement?
- LG: Oh, yes.
- HY: What type of . . .
- LG: Yes, yes. Up and down.
- HY: 'Cause you mentioned like family court at some point . . .
- LG: Well, family court obviously usually was a kid-friendly situation. Our workers knew more about the family and the circumstances and the kid's functioning than say their probation officer would know. We were frequently in touch with the counselors who worked with them collaboratively. One example, I'll call him Tommy. That is his name, it's not his last name. He was from Hilo, moved to Honolulu I guess when he was five or six with his mom, father had left, ran out on them long time before that. So, he was essentially without a dad. I think he lived in Mayor Wright's. By the time he was fourteen, he was one of my better hikers and he really enjoyed going out on the sites I told you about. By the summer he was fourteen, we had him as a junior leader in our day camp program which is actually just a summer building program. We call it day camp [in] contrast to the residence camp, but the kids don't spend any

nights there. It's an eight [A.M.] to two [P.M.] type of thing, six-week summer fun. But with a smaller, much more intense counselor-kid ratio than the city park's type of program.

Tommy was a junior leader and that particular summer he was involved in fourteen car thefts. Never an instigator, just always a go-alonger but would always get a bad rap. And Saiji Zakimi was his probation counselor, assigned from family court. Well, I had my better hiking kids for a couple of summers available as guides to other summer fun programs. And I remember when the Wahiawā parks and recreation program called and wanted somebody to take their leaders on a trip down into the Kaukonahua pools which is *mauka* of Wahiawā, (some of) the best swimming holes on the island. But they didn't know how to get there. So, I sent Tommy out, and he took, oh must have been maybe twenty counselors and leaders, playground leaders and so on, down on this trail. He was too shy to talk to the group, but he would talk to their leader and the leader would then talk to the group. So, Tommy explained the plants and the native white hibiscus and why the pools were the color they were, and a lot of the things he knew. We used to leave Pālama, say at noon, and get out there and be in the pools by two o'clock, bunch of my hiking kids. And then he brought them all back out. Well, this was the first time he ever had a couple dozen people older than himself totally dependent on him. He got 'em in, he got 'em out. He was the only one who knew it, who knew the place. And I could see his backbone stiffen and then I remember overhearing him tell his buddies that were probably planning another car heist, "Ah, you stupid, I not going do that." And from that time on, he'd never had another arrest. He'd found himself. This was a kid who was ego deficient. This is an easy thing to do. This is basically what Outward Bound does, the therapy of choice in so many cases. Anyway, Tommy went straight. He works for the air force. He married a Mexican girl and lives in Sierra Vista, Arizona. He comes through every few years and he always looks me up and he always looks up Saiji Zakimi. Anyway how did I get into that? (Laughs)

HY: Well I asked about the courts.

LG: Well, this is working with the [family] courts. Well, another relationship with the police is not a happy one at all. [There's a] service station [that] had a back room where the beat cops would take in the teenagers if they suspected something and work 'em over to get 'em to admit to something whether they done it or not. And [the owner] had this deal with the police on the tow-away zones and whatnot. [He] went right along with that. He hosted them. And I had one of my boys that had done his time at Ko'olau and had come out and was doing his very best to go straight. And he was the first one the cops always came for when something happened that looked like it had his print on it. And he got worked over a few times in [the back] room. And it didn't break him, he kept going straight because he had us. But oh he was very bitter, and I was very bitter.

Mostly our relationships [were] with family court, school counselors, vice principals who were the disciplinarians in the schools, sometimes the principals, family. Well, I had one boy I visited him in jail, I think he was an adult at that point. [He served] a year and half [and] did his time. And that turned him around and he cleaned up his act and went in the army and no further problems. And then he was killed in a street brawl that was not his fault in Germany. So, he's now buried up in the Punchbowl [Cemetery]. He's one of our success stories that didn't get a chance to live it out. I can go into lots of them.

HY: How common knowledge was this that, you know, law enforcement—that the police

would. . . .

LG: Do that?

HY: Yeah.

LG: Pretty common knowledge among the kids in the neighborhood. I didn't broadcast it around the community. I don't know why we didn't take some action on it either.

HY: You had mentioned last time too that the set of interviews that Fay [Alailima] had done with Samoan families and one of the aspects of that was the money economy.

LG: Right.

HY: Was there anything that was done with that specific information?

LG: We set up no programs in that respect. I don't know. There may have been some education involving the money economy, but we didn't do it. Thinking back on it, we should have. It would have been a good thing to do. Simply, we've pin-pointed the major point [areas] where they were not succeeding in the modern Hawaiian society. They were succeeding in all other aspects but not there. I'm sure that the auto mechanics course came out of that, because they had been so obviously cheated. But that came about because we heard of a fellow being cheated. And we knew that handling money was a problem and so we approached the auto mechanic thing. [They] might not have come to a budgeting class, but they certainly came to a how-to-fix-your-own-car class.

(Laughter)

LG: We had one very handsome Samoan kid. Samoan-German is a frequent mix because of Germany's occupation. And this boy was a bright kid and he just didn't like to go to school. He could handle it very well, he just didn't want to go. So every year, in the fall, he and his dad would have a beef and the dad would lick him and he'd go to school. And it was kind of a ritual. Finally the boy got to be big enough that the dad couldn't lick him, so he didn't go to school after that. But it was a perfectly acceptable family ritual. The boy didn't resent it and the dad didn't seem to mind it. It was a form of discipline that is very Samoan—very physical and very immediate. It was like, those are the rules and okay don't go to school all year.
(Laughs)

HY: What about the girls? I know you talk a lot about these guys.

LG: 'Cause I work mostly with the guys, but we had just as many girls. And we had women workers who worked with the girls' clubs, girls' groups. And the girls had their own nature problems—early pregnancies, truancy, disobedience, gangs. I remember intermediate school, particularly, is about where, at least for our population, the Japanese kids and the Hawaiian-*hapa* kids split apart in school because of the Japanese kids being able to handle the school disciplines and the expectations and getting the grades, and the teachers recognizing [them for it]. And the other kids having more trouble, usually less support at home, and get feeling out of the web in school. So then they begin to, intermediate school time—this happened mostly with girls, not so much with the boys—beat up on the Japanese kids.

And I got wind of a gang of girls, our girls, non-Japanese, who were waiting for a group of Japanese girls, also our girls, as they came home from Central one afternoon. I don't know who tipped me off to it. But I knew all the back alleys in the area, and I had this little—I guess it was a little Austin at that time—small car. And I made myself very visible—up and down all the back alleys, and back and forth, back and forth—spent the whole afternoon at it. I never saw the kids and the fight never happened. But it was some weeks later that one of the kids, who was a ring leader in the gang, who was going to do the beating, complained to me that I was all over the place. (Laughs)

That was a separation you began to see. And the schooling and teachers' attitudes led to that really. So, we usually tried to consciously lance it in the school situation. We made no discrimination in who we involved as junior leaders, cheerleaders and role models for kids, and just as with the boys, didn't really matter what your schooling was. This is pre-Pop Warner.

One fellow, who today owns a printing shop, a very successful Kalihi businessman, was one of my best junior leaders. The school had one image of him and we had another. And (when we) went to talk to the vice principal, (he said,) "Are we talking about the same guy?" And the point is the kid lives up to what is expected of him. And we expected a lot and the school didn't. We got a lot and they didn't. This is why I wanted this staff if they enter the kids' [life] at a certain developmental period, you stay through that and the next one too, so they can carry that along 'cause you can carry it to a good conclusion, but you can't if you pull out and somebody new tries to come in.

HY: I think it's interesting that the girl gangs tend to group together in ethnic groups. . . .

LG: In exclusion of an ethnic group.

HY: In exclusion.

LG: Well, you see . . .

HY: And these are informal gangs, they're not clubs . . .

LG: No, no they're not clubs. Clubs, well, sometimes clubs fell along that line, too. But the demographics were changing.

HY: We're talking about in, through the. . . .

LG: [Nineteen] fifties and [19]60s, yeah. The land had been originally by mostly Hawaiian families, and still was and frequently bought out by Chinese families. But names like McGregor. McGregor Lane is still there, and then there's Austin Lane, and then there's Auld Lane and Buddy Peterson—Peterson Lane and so on. So many of the---Desha Lane. Many Hawaiian families left their imprint. The Chinese were still residents to some degree, but were largely absentee landlords. And the Japanese tenants didn't own land very much. I did a whole study on land ownership in our area at one point. But they were—by the time I was there—I'd say 50 percent of them had moved out into middle class situations. Nisei had gotten their education and their positions. So, I think the fellow who was a lawyer in the—lived in Saint Louis—who was head of the Mō'ili'ili Community Association, was a Pālama kid. Just kind of

a demographic out movement. And the Filipino kids were in because the Filipinos were coming off the plantations—one of the last big, Filipino immigration was in '46, bachelor men, largely. And in many cases they married Hawaiian girls, who would put up with an old Filipino bachelor.

So that element was quite strong. And there was always kind of a residual Puerto Rican element up around School Street, Lanakila side. And the Samoans were just coming in—in my day. You could just see the Japanese girls were a distinct minority in that situation, but scholastically achieving and sometimes coming to the settlement only for music lessons or only for a club activity, certainly not hanging around for the canteen dances after dinner. Their families wanted them home. And so, different family standards, inevitable. We had a fine group of girls. They called themselves the Flashy Frosh. And Yvonne Choy, Bonnie Choy, she later became Chinatown Queen, was it? Or Narcissus Queen? She was one of our girls. Fine kids. That was a mixed group. And we had—I'll use her name because she won't mind—Nora Furuno is now at Kapi'olani Community College. She came to us as a ninth grader in some club, it wasn't the Flashy Frosh. And she became a junior leader in our day camp program. And I became aware of her in that, because the director of the day camp program really enjoyed her. (Then she was a counselor for a couple of summers.) And when she was a sophomore at the UH I put her in charge of that program and was roundly criticized by my board because she was so young. I said, "You wait." Two hundred and twenty kids, about twenty counselors, usually UH-level counselors, about twenty junior leaders, our own teenagers, boys and girls that were role models that we were pushing in that direction. A full hot lunch program with a cafeteria manager borrowed from the neighborhood school, arts and crafts program, a drama program, athletic program, swimming program, big bus trip for the whole gang every Friday to some beach somewhere, six weeks of this. I never found anybody that could tune up either a kid or a junior leader or an adult counselor and have 'em happy about being tuned up and stay tuned up. Nora would come in about November and start planning for the following June. I don't know how many years she did it, three or four years. Once she came in in February (to start planning) and said, "Pops, I'm worried."

And I said, "Well, Toots, if you're worried, I'm panicked. What is it you want? We'll do anything." (Laughs) And just flawless program. She went on to get her degree in social work and she was the program director and the assistant executive of Mō'ili'ili Community Association before she went on to Kapi'olani Community College. She still runs my outer-island trips for my MGF. Well, I run 'em, but she does all the commissary. She bosses everybody, and it's fine. And her folks used to hike with me and her younger sister used to hike with me. Very fond memories of the old folks. But, she's a Pālama girl. No buts about it, incredibly successful.

HY: Did you find that the girls responded to the camping treatment programs in the same way?

LG: They weren't usually the [court] referrals. Almost always the referrals were boys. And our mountain camping set-up when I designed the camp to correct some of the deficiencies of the old one—the one the [tsunami] hit—[in order for] the boys to get to the cafeteria [they had to] come by the girls' bathroom, a few of their planning snafus. We put the cafeteria in the middle. And a boys' unit here and a boys' unit here [on either side] and the girls' unit up here [further away]. And the terrain got quite narrow with the gulch on either side, so the access could be controlled. And then the staff, the director, and whatnot were here, the girls were up there. And the dispensary was there

with the nurse, and the opening of her tent facing on to the trail that the girls had to use to come back up. They had ready access to the nurse and could drop in and talk, and camp director could keep an eye on this. And between the [older and younger] boys' [units] there was a one-staff tent. [There] were the bad boys and the good boys, [who] were the boys who were holding the cigarettes for the bad boys. (Chuckles) But, it allowed each unit to program separately on their own or with another unit. We did some things as a whole camp together. It was largely sixteen kids and their leaders planning what they wanted to do given the available resources and such. So, there was always a small number of girls. And that was pretty much Pālama style, too. Parents really didn't want to have their girls, at a teenage level, going out and away. And at an elementary level, they would rather have them in a civilized camp like the old one was down at the beach. Or in the day camp program. And a lot of Hawaiian families too, the older girl gets to be a surrogate mother rather quickly and so she's got a lot of responsibilities raising siblings [that] kids in other backgrounds don't have. The Japanese older brothers do, but not like the Hawaiian girl does.

The military used to give us a problem up there, but that's a whole other story. They used the camp area as a training program before we got it. And with their lousy communication within themselves, every two years there'd be a new CO [commanding officer] or somebody at Schofield [Barracks] and they go train in the middle of our camp. I remember one night, Kay Asato was walking back from a staff meeting up the paved road to get back to the girls' unit. There was a tank in the middle with no lights on. It began firing (chuckles) in the middle of our Easter camp. Kay Asato was in the ditch.

HY: She was a counselor?

LG: Yeah, she went on to be a social worker.

HY: And so how do you resolve this, those kinds of problems?

LG: Oh, Pālama has probably two full file drawers of correspondence between me and the army. And I'm sure that their real estate agents at [Fort] Shafter had the same ones, which they never consult. See, the real estate office is civil service. But the Schofield [office] was not. And the colonel in charge of training and operations would be new every two years and the real estate office wouldn't apprise them of what the changed status was up there.

And so one Easter we went up. [The army] had a mess hall set up on our volleyball court and they dug a slit trench in the middle of our conference fire, our most sacred ground. And they gouged out the whole hillside to clear up a drainage problem, without ever asking me. They took the last little bit of remaining of 'ōhi'a lehua forest that was in the area. So, I would waste time at Schofield, go to the commanding general, go to the commanding general, go to the commanding general and I must have gone to half a dozen of them over the years. And they would (LG snaps fingers) rectify it like that. It would be all right for a couple of years and then there'd be a change, then I would go to a commanding general again.

Even more recently, after I left, Bob [Robert] Higashino left the camp really run-down. And the army was in it again, moving around and training on it. And the local GIs—a GI's in there for a short term. He didn't care what his sergeant tells him to do. He'll just put in his time. It's not a big issue, just a continuing one. I think Bob [Robert T.] Omura [current executive

director] has been a little more aggressive about it. And they have a camp caretaker now, Anderson, Leif Anderson. How's that for a Scandinavian name? (Chuckles) And he's down at Waialua Sugar [Company], works for them, but he loves the camp and puts a lot of time in fixing it up and all kinds of stuff.

HY: So, he didn't stay up there?

LG: No, but he's up and down a lot. But they can't afford to put in anything that could be ripped off without a resident caretaker. And we've had plans over and over and over. If you had a resident caretaker then you could put in a kitchen facility that met board of health standards. Then you could rent the camp to school groups, and be the only decent mountain camp on the island. And they could make money. But none of my successors has gotten that far.

HY: Did you get at all involved in your brother's politics, the campaigning?

LG: In the early days. Got nothing to do with Pālama, except my nephew Gary [Gill] was campaigning on the medial strip in Vineyard [Boulevard] in Liliha. And he said he was waving at cars, I guess, running for [city] councilman or something. And watched this lady come from the corner, by Mayor Wright's. And she came up to him and said, "I want to tell you about your uncle." (Laughs) She was one of my old Pālama mothers, but she recognized the name. So, you got an earful whether you wanted it or not.

I was a political science major and graduated in '51. Tom graduated from UC [University of California] Berkeley in '48, went into law school, came back here about '51 full of concerns and ambitions for what should be done to change the old guard. The Democrats had risen to the heights of their capacities, say about 1948 and were stymied—Jack Burns, Dan Aoki, this crew—largely by lack of education, there was nobody there with a law degree or college background in the group of democrats who were strongly ILWU [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union] supported through the shipping strikes and the dock strikes and the plantation strikes. But they weren't able to dump the Republicans, and just got stuck there.

John Akau, who had a student residence just behind the Atherton Y [Young Men's Christian Association] was county chairman. And I forgot all the players but my brother got involved very early on and so did the boys from the 442[nd Regimental Combat Team] who came back with an education. And early movers, Tadao Beppu is one of them, even Dave "McClunk" [McClung], Sakae Takahashi, and Vince Esposito, my brother, so largely the O'ahu liberals, you would say. And they conceived the platform, it was a land reform platform that the public wanted. And Tom ran that first campaign and they won, that was the sweep. And everybody was real happy, but the [John] Burns element was very threatened by this. And immediately there was jockeying in the situation and my dear Pālama boy, Charlie [Charles] Kauhane finessed a deal between the ILWU-supported Democrats and the remnant Republicans and had enough votes to control the legislature. And so the starry-eyed liberals, the Takahashis, Gills, Espositos, et cetera were swept aside in terms of house organization. They didn't go under by any means, but the old guard, who was largely outside and there were some island O'ahu ILWUs supported too and in with that. The very next election, every O'ahu Democrat who had joined that coalition was dumped, the voters dumped them. So, the O'ahu voters made it very clear as to their displeasure with it. The ILWU still controlled the outer islands and so Tom's strengths in the outer islands was in the independent areas. I helped identify some of those in

1950, did a census analysis of land ownerships and population trends on all the islands. And between the '40 census and '50 census, the only areas on the outer islands where the population increased were those areas where people could own land. So, Ahulua on the Big Island, Wailuku area, Kahului area on Maui, Hanapēpē Heights and Kapa'a on Kaua'i were the only areas where the population increased, every place else diminished 'cause it's totally on plantation or leased lands. And his strengths were in those areas and in Kona.

I did some grassroots, quick organizing of campaigners and that type of thing in Tom's first couple of campaigns. He very soon got a very loyal following of people that didn't sweep me aside, but I wasn't that essential any longer. Always campaigned for him—their coffee hours and neighborhood beats to percolate and give people literature. Dorothy Kohashi was one of the strong supporters and Joyce Esposito even after Vince's death.

One of my favorite campaign routes was up here on East Mānoa. And there was this house—I used to come on the lanai and I could see koa furniture and some calabashes and things. Very interesting. And I'm going down to this sign that says: No solicitors, no missionaries, no Democrats. (Laughs) And so I put all my literature in the car and I went up and knocked on the door, introduced myself. It was a kamaaina, part-Hawaiian family and I said, "I'd just love to see your artifacts. I'd love to see your furniture." We talked koa wood, we talked all kinds of stuff. I didn't talk politics at all. And they knew who I was.

(Laughter)

LG: I don't know if we ever got a vote out of them, but that wasn't my intent. But that "No Democrats"—that was terrific. The public has a short memory, it doesn't last two years, and unfortunately, the elections are every two years. And it doesn't quite last until the next election. And things can be done.

Hiram Fong was real dirty in his campaign [for U.S. Senate in 1964] against my brother. Tom was going to unseat him, but he pointed out all the times that Tom had not been on the floor to vote in the U.S. House. And they were all the times when it didn't matter, when there was a substantial Democratic vote and didn't affect Hawai'i. Any vote that was critical, Tom was there. And they hired real high-powered ad agencies, which we could never do. And I think the essential message was that the pigs aren't going to feed at the public trough if my brother gets in. And in the islands, everybody kind of wants to feed at that trough and they don't do it too openly. And they don't seem to protest the other guys, as long as they know they are going to get their turn. And seems to be a quiet way of doing things.

I told you about the building inspector and my dad. Dad set a standard, and people say, there's a saying that the acorns don't fall very far from the tree. So they panicked, if they had Tom in there they're going to have an honest government and they couldn't stand that and everything coalesced against him. But things that he foresaw and said were going to happen virtually all happened.

The counties pushed to overdevelop in Maui, for instance, the Kihei and Kahana area and the Big Island to some degree. The counties wanted to keep their kids home. They didn't want their kids to have to always go away. Okay, one out of ten of our high school graduates ends up in Los Angeles, at least that, it's the brain drain. Tom pointed out by overdeveloping, you don't have any island contractors who can do this. The contractor's going to have to come in

from O'ahu or from the Mainland to these big projects. You're not going to get anything for your businesses that way. Your kids are going to be the barkeeps and room maids. They're not going to want that. They're not going to move up in it. You're going to have to import cheap Mainland labor—Maui's imported a lot of Mexican labor. They're going to be paid minimum wage, but they're going to have schools and all, so they're going to be a drain on your county resources, so the net result's going to be a loss to you. And it has been, down the line. He saw that way down. Shunichi Kimura did something different on the Big Island. . . .

HY: We might run out [of tape] here.

LG: Okay.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

LG: [Big Island planning] director Ray [Raymond] Suefuji, who after Shunichi's tenure as mayor of the Big Island, became [involved in] the Kaka'ako redevelopment later. And he was the best planning director that we probably had in the islands, and I think Shunichi, bar none, was the best mayor. But he's an old buddy anyway. We used to have a group here on campus called the Termites and the main job was undermining the [UH Board of] Regents. Shunichi was the one who insisted that, collection areas for the trash, where the people take their stuff to the. . . .

HY: Recycling?

LG: It's a big van that you dump your stuff into various bits, and much of it goes to a landfill. But prior to that time, people just dumping in the gulches and all. Rats were a problem, bubonic plague had reentered Hāmākua because of the garbage in the gulches. Shunichi cleared that up but his planning director, naturally with Shunichi's support, would not grant approval for development unless the developer was willing to establish a school for hotel and resort management for local kids and time this development to open when the first class graduated. And they held this over C. Brewer [and Company, Ltd.] down at the SeaMountain area in Punalu'u, Big Island, down in Ka'ū. C. Brewer never did it. But this was the thing, we don't want our kids to just be the barmaids and bar boys or room maids, but to get into management, if you'll do that we'll approve your development.

That slowed a lot of things down on the Big Island and unfortunately it was never really realized, we're still losing one out of ten, ten or eleven principally outer island graduates to LA [Los Angeles]. Case in point, Peter Kamakawiwoole. I had a club called the Rainbows. And they were perfectly normal, sane, well-behaved kids and I told my supervisors I've got to have one such group. Both for my own sanity and as a yardstick against which to measure the others.

So, I kept this group from ninth grade through high school graduation, went to all their graduations, went to most of their marriages and we had reunions once in a while and so on. But Peter was the only Hawaiian in this group, which was Japanese, Filipino, Chinese,

Hawaiian. And Peter was trained at Honolulu Community College in an electronics field. It was up and coming, but there were only two positions in the islands when he got out, both with Hawaiian Tel. Sat around for six months, couldn't get a job, went to LA, had a job in two days and lived there for over ten years before he came home. And he used to say how in the locker room, in the company plant, he'd get out his ukulele, after work from his locker room, the Hawai'i boys would sit around and they'd jam for a while and they'd say, "You know, the trouble up here. You got the *kotonk* Japanese and you got the *kotonk* Chinese and you got the *kotonk* Koreans, even got the *kotonk* Filipinos, but no more *kotonk* Hawaiians." And I think it was in '63 when Tom was in Congress and my mom and I went through to visit and go up to New England and I spent the first night with Peter. He met me at the airport. He said, "Oh, I know you're homesick. I have a big Hawaiian feast." The Pālama kids in LA had trained a grocer on Armacost Street, who brought in *lau lau* and poi and *kim chee* and all the good stuff, you know (laughs) and *kamaboko* and everything. "I know you're homesick, Peter. You've been up here what eight years now. I've only been here half an hour. (Laughs) You're the homesick one." Good fun. And he came home. He's very active at Kawaiaha'o Church and his son's a minister in Kaimukī, a fine family.

HY: Is that a symptom of social work as an occupation—you know you said you had to have this group just for your own sanity, your good group?

LG: I don't know. I know not necessarily, but I certainly needed some incentive and some good experiences throughout the day. The stress in that kind of work is pretty heavy, and I told you about the months vacations you had to take . . .

HY: Yeah.

LG: And the two months [vacation] you could and so on, but I need some relief on the spot. Oh, these kids weren't angels. I get a call from Pālama Theatre. I know my Rainbows would occupy a whole couple of rows for the matinees, and the manager from Pālama Theatre would call me up and say, "Your boys are making such a ruckus in the theater. Can't you do something?"

"Well you can do something. Thrown 'em out!"

(Laughter)

LG: "Your theater, throw 'em out. I won't argue."

Another club was called the Jokers. We could see these stray boys around who knew each other but weren't friends and really didn't associate with each other. Everybody sort of knows the other guys face and that generation. They don't know this [other] generation or this one. These kids had all been failures in other groups, failures because they were good kids and wouldn't go along with some of the things. Not all of our clubs had really angelic behavior. They might while we were with them, but they might not when we're not with them. And so these kids had all sort of dropped out. They had been burned, some of them a couple of times. And they were Filipino, Puerto Rican, Portuguese, Hawaiian, Chinese, don't think there's any Japanese boy in them. I don't want to see them drifting fourteen years old and there's still a lot of time to get drawn the wrong way. They didn't want to make a club, nope. I got them together, we had a meeting, they introduced each other—where the other guy lived and so on,

what school they went to—but no they didn't want to make club. Ah, forget the club. [I asked them,] "Do you like to hike?"

"Gee, we never did that."

Well, I said, "I know a really beautiful place and its got a stream on top of the mountain where you can swim." You go up Punalu'u Valley and then the trail zigzags up the face of the Kahuku side of the Pali, up to about 2,100 feet. A fabulous view, all the way down to Makapu'u and then you go over and you're in the watershed that drains over Sacred Falls, the Kaluanui watershed. In about a half hour in, you come to this fabulous stream that's the highest stream on the island and its water's sweet, it's rain fed, hasn't aerated yet.

So, I took them up and as you're going up, it's all fog, fog, fog, fog, fog, fog and I'm standing there at the top, well, here's Punalu'u Valley. Can't see anything but white and out there is Mōkapu. Okay so we go on, nice cold, chilly swim, they loved that and lunch and whatnot. And we're coming back, we're out to the—it's called the *ku'emaka* eyebrow, the point at the top of a *pali*, it's the Hawaiian topographical term. And we're at the *ku'emaka*, looking down, it's all white fog and they're going, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah." And then it cleared. (LG snaps his fingers.) Just like that. And I heard, up and down the line—I guess I had a dozen kids—this involuntary gasp of appreciation. And they each heard it from [each] other, and then they realized that they all liked the same thing. They all responded to this utterly, incredible view, one of the top ten views in the islands really, when you come down to it. Well, by the time we reached the foot of the hill, takes about an hour and a half to get down, they had a [club] name, they had a meeting time, they had their officers, and then they stuck together all the way into adulthood. 'Cause they had this support, protection against everything else.

And I remember one time we went around the island, bike ride. It was one of our favorite activities, and I'd take our stuff in the trunk out and leave it with the old caretaker, who was blind, out at Hau'ula. He had a concession in the pavilion and he'd stash our stuff. He used to be a Pālama supporter before he was blind. And then we'd ride bike and we'd get there and spend the night in tents and such. And then next, after we get home again, I'd go back with the truck and get the stuff.

Well, this particular night, I had to vote at a precinct meeting. It was pretty critical and so I had a couple of my friends, who would come out and stay with the kids while I went in and voted. And then I came out and then they went home. No troubles these kids, just trust them implicitly. And there was a Czech[oslovakian] who was bicycling around the island by himself. And he'd been nine years in Australia, waiting for his entry into the U.S. And so he was there and these were his first American kids. And our kids saw that he was over there by himself, so said, "We going invite him for breakfast?" And so they brought him for breakfast. And he was just enjoying it. And they were just treating him like anybody [else] and they were telling him how it is to ride and all that kind of stuff.

And he said, "I did some youth work in Australia and I would never take even four Australian kids into the bush, 'cause they'd go in four different directions. It wouldn't be safe, I wouldn't be responsible for them. How do you manage all of these?" No problem, I have one lead kid who leads the pack and he stops every half mile or so and they reassemble and I'm in the rear, it's fine. He said, "These are my first American kids," and he said, "I've been treated so

beautifully.”

I said, “These are your first Hawaiian kids. I don’t know if these are American kids. These are kids that are in Hawai’i.” He saw all these different races, and of course Australia at that time was still with the Oriental exclusion policies. So, I think that was a great introduction for him.

HY: You said he was Czechoslovakian?

LG: He was Czechoslovakian, but a lot of East Europeans went to Australia and then came to the U.S. But the Jokers have hung together. I still know where a few of them are. They haven’t had a reunion for sometime that I’ve been invited to. That was a very significant experience in their adolescence and we saw the need, had the tool, put it together, nurtured it and it worked. Maybe this is why people speak very fondly of their Pālama experience, ’cause they see that a lot of good things happened. And if you’d been one of the movers in the good things, it’s very satisfying.

HY: What do you see for future of Pālama Settlement?

LG: Keeping a settlement house. It’s always going to be needed in that area, as long as it’s a low-rent area, as long as there’s public housing. It’ll be the place where the immigrant and the underskilled and the underemployed will gravitate to, the rents are low. It’s always been the entry point for people coming off the plantations. That’s why the population demographics have reflected that. Okay, now we’re not coming to the plantations any longer. And there are more Samoans here and in LA than there are in American Samoa.

I don’t know what the future of that is, but as long as it’s low income and as long as low income frequently equates with unemployment and single-parent families there’s going to be a need for something within walking distance. And settlement houses are so flexible in their basic charter program that they can always be looking down the road to see the emerging need and designing something for it. This is where the creativity and social programs come from. Up till we become a utopian society, and I don’t see much hope in that.

Maybe one of the things the settlement has not done adequately, certainly didn’t in my day, did do in Bobby [Robert] Rath’s dad’s day, was beat on the major establishment for programs and for services. [James Arthur Rath was the founder and executive director, 1905–29.]

HY: You mean?

LG: Beat on the community. Bobby’s father solicited from the community for the gymnasium and the pools and all that. They got these contributions out of the wealthy for the poor. They kept this rule all the time even though, good parts of the establishment were down on it. Probably, ceased to have to do that when the New Deal came in and a good number of the categorical aid programs were established. You no longer had to go out and beat your own community for the welfare for their poor folk. Well, those programs have been greatly eroded now. We’re back into the make the bastards work, whether they can or not.

We’ve really dismantled a lot of things in the last four years and earlier. It was [President Ronald] Reagan who put the mentally ill back on the streets and closing down a lot of the aid programs for the hospital’s treatment programs and halfway houses. And you started seeing

your street people talking to themselves on the corner at the end of the Reagan time. And so it's been going on now. The American public goes through these big swings and we're now in the big swing, everybody should be able to take care of himself, whether he's able to or not.

HY: Did you feel a lot of pressure to go out into the community and [secure funding]?

LG: Well, I haven't been in that situation for almost twenty years now, so I don't know what they have as a way of their pressures.

Well, we lost Model Cities after I left. Basically it was still going and the Model Cities congress was functioning when I left. Services that we needed at the settlement, like some of the worker positions, I was not getting from the AUW and that wouldn't have come through the Model Cities. But you don't put your eggs in short-term federal funding baskets.

When I left Pālama end of '69, we had a total budget of about 650,000 dollars which could do more than today's dollars. And maybe a quarter of that was federal money, maybe less. And I had a staff of full and part-time of about sixty and of course there were volunteers. It was a big operation. We were counting on using the federal money, but didn't expect it to last. And it didn't. The OEO programs, the whole idea, usually of those, was not the New Deal idea of say establishing an ongoing public service, but of seed money for things that the community would later pick up. And that's always a very pious statement and it's not a bad idea because some of the demonstration projects are not worth picking up. Those that are worth picking up generally don't get picked up to the degree to which they need to. They remain viable however. But then of course a lot of things we started back before the war, before the New Deal, did get picked up. Public health nursing stands out in my mind as probably the best. We used to have a camping program, the Pālama-by-the-Sea was called the fresh air camp and this was way before my time. They had a homemaker service for mothers, and they'd put a homemaker in the house for the weekend or several days and take the mother out to camp, let her have fun and relax with her neighbors and friends and give 'em courses in budgeting and home economics and sewing and a whole range of things. Homemaker camp must have been a neat camp. And then they come back home, homemaker leaves and they take over again, raise their skills. They're really innovative, good programs.

They had a TB dorm on Pālama and was right behind Kaumakapili Church. I think the building's gone now. It's being used as a boarding house for single men, but it was an in-house, in-town facility. And then those were the days when they believed that fresh air could cure TB.

Innovative programs have come out our ying-yang over the years, and some took and some didn't. The well-baby clinics and the needy clinics, we started those.

HY: Well, is there anything else that you want to add about anything? Or in particular of Pālama Settlement?

LG: I visited settlement houses on a trip to the Mainland. I made it a point. In '63, I visited Henry Street and Hull-House and Good Samaritan and I found them all busy as can be. Every quarter jumping the way Pālama was, everybody not stressed but working to the max[imum]. The director's desk every bit as messy as mine, funding a problem, emerging new needs a problem. And everybody, as far as I could talk to, trying to meet the future needs. Settlement house is, I

guess, my favorite social institution in terms of social welfare because it's right on the firing line. And they always have the freedom to innovate, and the human race being what it is, I think there will always be a future.

For a while we had one in Hilo, the Waiākea [Social] Settlement house and it was almost always staffed by people they'd stolen from Pālama or we'd train them and they went there. But that got wiped out with a tsunami, the buildings are all gone. The Hilo community, knowing it had problems with delinquents, wanted to do something about it, but they wouldn't come to Honolulu to ask the School of Social Work because this was Honolulu and this was outer island against Honolulu. So [they] don't want any Honolulu people telling [them] what to do. So they brought in a consultant from the Mainland, from the Boys Club of America, who studied their situation, and instead of coming up with recommendations that would have approximated the old settlement house—plethora of approaches—he recommended they start up a Boys Club, so they did. So, now they got a Boys Club and they still got their problems. So, Pālama's influence doesn't reach as widely as it used to.

HY: Anything else?

LG: Well, I hate to stop talking about my favorite subject, but I think we'd probably better.
(Laughs)

HY: Please go on.

LG: No, I think I've exhausted it. I'll think of something on the way home.

HY: Okay, thank you very much.

LG: You're very welcome and you're very easy to talk with.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 27-36-3-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Lorin T. Gill (LG)

Honolulu, O'ahu

December 2, 1997

BY: Holly Yamada (HY)

HY: This a continuation of the interview with Lorin Gill. It's December 2, 1997.

You wanted to . . .

LG: Yeah, I felt that the basic—how would you say—attributes of a settlement setting had not been succinctly addressed. (Chuckles) But just as in a residence camp, if you're remote and away from things, you can control all the factors except the weather. To a degree that also exists on the campus, if you will, of a settlement house and to a far lesser degree in the immediate neighborhood. But there are the many elements that you had a finger in. And the difference from the camp setting is that you've quite a bit of time, as long as the family doesn't move out of the area, and you can remain attractive through your program to different elements of that family—maybe not all elements, but certain of them. You can have a very profound effect over a period of time, but it needs to be planned. And that's usually done, sometimes quite formally, like staff conference over a given case or a family. But usually not that formally done—at least in our haphazard setting—but done by the one or more of the concerned workers who knows the child, constantly keeping in touch with what else is happening in the settlement setting, talking with other staff and seeing what the athletic director is doing, what the coach is sensitive to, especially in younger children.

A lot with the arts and crafts people is some pretty good diagnostic possibilities. When you see kids given free rein with paint on a paper, and especially if the teacher is sensitive to it and asks what he or she is doing, there will be times when the child will do some real expression. And then I remember one kid, after having done it, covering an entire [paper] with brown, painting over the whole thing and suppressing again. So, little clues. And then sometimes you have the advantage of psychologists that will be a consultant [with] you or somebody that is doing it pro bono.

HY: There would never be on-staff people, right?

LG: Not necessarily, you really can't afford that. But Joe Blaylock, for instance, who was with the prison system, was a member of our program committee and basically a volunteer and a psychologist, and a really neat guy. And [he] would be happy to drop by and look at something you'd saved, maybe from arts and crafts and then listen to the description and other demonstrating behavior. And kids that are below ten [years old] are not terribly subtle about

concealing anything—older than that they definitely get that way.

And then you've attracted the child to the program. And if it's younger children you've frequently had contact [with the] mother as well, who comes down to register the kid for a class or for day camp. And even if you haven't had parental contact, we have to have permission forms—"we" how 'bout that (laughs)—permission forms for outings. And it's both a protection and a device. So sometimes you take the form home with the kid rather than just sending it home, and get to explain what the activity is going to be. And we do it all in the up-front assumption that the parent is interested and would be concerned, and so you have an opening. But in that opening you can size up how the house is cared for, and where's the garbage, and who's running around pulling at what, and sort of what—you just get a sense. You keep this up and you'll get to, sooner or later, meet more members of the family. It's not an idea that the staff sits in a barricaded campus, you're always out into the community talking with parents of your children.

[If there's a] particular seasonal activity coming up, you know who [of the parents] can get involved. And parents by and large, time permitting, want to do something. They also don't want to butt in. Kind of an interesting thing. You're sort of---If they don't like what you're doing, they'll take the kid away. It isn't that they'll come down and beat up on you or (laughs) something of the sort. And so, one or more of the staff will have a greater insight into the family functioning than say another staff, or if somebody were part-time. Team coach wouldn't have those insights, but then you share them.

Some of the old-time staff, pretty hard to get them to do anything different from what they've been doing, when what they've been doing is never bad. May not be the best, but it's never bad, it's always at least a neutral element or slightly positive element. And when they understand some of the things that are going on, they'll give—I wouldn't say give a break to a certain person—but make it possible for them to get into another activity where there is a little more responsibility where they can discharge a little more of themselves, as a role model or something, for younger kids. So, you do a great deal of, fairly conscious, but very low-key, manipulation. Sometimes it'll be very key, like if the kid's been referred to us.

There was a boy who was, quote, an "overachiever" because he really is basically an underachiever, but he really, really pushed himself in school and such. And the family was on public welfare and the caseworker—the family's totally unknown to us, and kind of just on the outside of our primary area. The settlement divided up the neighborhood into the primary area which is bounded by, I think, School [Street] and Dillingham [Boulevard] and Houghtailing [Street], and Liliha [Street]. And we kind of expected to be on top of everything in that area, wishful thinking but still.

HY: I'm sorry "expected"—self-imposed expectations?

LG: Well, yeah, self-imposed. We wanted to be an effective agent in the lives of virtually everybody in that area, and that's the easy-walk distance for kids. Then the secondary area, which we were concerned about 'cause it would affect our primary [area], was from Kalihi [Street] to Nu'uuanu [Avenue] and everything *mauka*, *makai*. It sort of helped you marshal your efforts. Well, this boy lived just on the edge of a primary area and the caseworker brought him over to the settlement to see if there was something [he'd] be interested in doing, some kind of an after-school activity. I think he was in intermediate school. And he was totally passive, but

wouldn't be a problem to anybody. And I forget what he got into. Believe it or not, I think it was drama.

We had a marvelous teacher. She was a French woman who had come to the U.S. in the First World War, prior to the U.S. entering the war, with a French team to induce the U.S. to come into the war on the side of the Allies. And she just stayed on in Hollywood—made quite a name for herself in silent [films] and then later on—Marcelle Corday was her name.

And she had an accent as thick as you could imagine. And the kids just loved her. She had high expectations. And we had a nice auditorium with a stage and an old-fashioned dimmer, and circuits that kept blowing, and curtains you could pull and stuff. And when she and her husband, Carlo, who was an ex-German naval officer, who had been interned in Guam prior to the U.S. entering the war. So, he was not a war prisoner, but he stayed in Hollywood and he was an expert on U-boats for Hollywood.

Anyway, they married, second marriage for both. He had an accent, equally heavy. It's interesting. And they'd throw a spaghetti party after their performances had been done and all, dress rehearsals and all the rest. And we had some of our most troubled teenagers in there. They got a great deal out of being able to be something that they were not in real life and then go back to being in real life. But this was a permissible outlet, and it's a very good therapy.

Well, this kid found his way into that. Because he was such an overachiever, pushing himself, we had him tutor some of the younger kids in some of their schoolwork. We would set it up, so "Ale" [Alejandro] and the kids would work one-on-one. And then he got into camping and my hiking program. He became a junior leader. We took this kid who was basically just all wrapped up, not in himself, but shielded from everything and trying real, real hard to meet parental expectations beyond his ability. And we just broadened him around to a pretty well-rounded person, I'd say, over a period of five or six years.

But we were aware of what we were doing. And we'd be thinking, we're having a program coming up, that'd be a good spot for Alejandro. Let's see if get him into that. This goes on. As I say, you don't have to get everything done in the course of a school year, or a course of a camp period, or a course of six months. And a teenager particularly is quite a different person a year after. You couldn't stand him at this point, and at [another] point things are different, but of course, you've contributed to that difference.

I suppose other programs could do this too, if they're conscious of it. Say, a branch of the YMCA could work similarly well, but I don't know that they do. Then you have the setting that's built up over the years, or the climate is built up over the years, where everybody has expectations of whoever comes on the grounds. And the older guys, out of high school, back from the army, who grew up as little kids there, they're back in some adult activities and lifting weights in the weight room and they're helping to coach. And they keep an eye on things. And if they were to see somebody coming on the grounds that was trying to manipulate something, or seduce someone or such, they'd probably take care of it themselves or they would go to some staff person that they really trusted and share the insight. One of the most insightful people we had was our night watchman.

HY: Do you remember his name?

LG: Oh, yeah, Henry Hamaishi. He's dead. His boys David and Carl are around and he had a daughter. He used to live right on the grounds. But, Henry's the one who'd be seeing the kids after we close—9:30 and then we finally close. [We would] spend a little while on the front steps with the guys still sitting there, but we're not going to stay there [until] midnight talking story. But he would. And they confided in him or he would just basically size up what he was hearing them say to each other.

And within a week or so he'd stop me, pull me off to the side or something, and tell me that so-and-so has been thrown out of his house, or somebody's having a real, real hard time and such, or this guy just got in trouble with that rumble that we'd heard about, but we didn't know who was in it, and so on. And he'd look at you, "You going do something, right?" (Laughs) Yes, I don't know what, but we're going do something. But we had an awful lot of our clues on the older boys from the night watchman. That was a very supportive environment.

Again there's an expectation of behavior. And I remember a situation in our canteen where a boy that was brought up Lanakila way, little outside of our area, but he'd come down. I don't know what the problem was. He was being very disruptive and offensive and I was about to move onto it, things I don't like to do, and three or four of the older fellas about his age or a bit older told him to come. And they took him down into the front yard and they said, "Look, you can come here all you like, but you cannot act like that. You act like that, you no going come. Okay? Get it? Straight?" (Laughs) So, he went away. And then he was back the next opportunity and his behavior is visibly changed. The kids did it. That builds over years, doesn't happen overnight.

We had a situation again where the boys took care of it. We had a front desk and the kids stayed out of the office at night; otherwise they'd be over all the workers desks and things with their feet in the air and such. But they could use a phone over the front desk for a short call. And our desk clerk, Henry Berido, was crippled—I guess it was polio—and he walked with difficulty. And this one guy was using the phone, and then the phones rang so Henry would have to walk back into the office to answer the phone and walk back again. And I was watching from my office. So, I went out and told the kid, "You know, you're way over your time. This is hard on Henry, hang it up." Okay, so he hung it up. And must have been five or ten minutes later, I was back in my office and I saw him out front asking me to come out. Okay, so I came out. First time I've ever been false cracked. First and last time. And I made the mistake of standing in the corridor, leaning against the wall with my hands behind my back. I've had enough karate and such to know that that's not what you do. (Chuckles) Anyway, he's a high school boy, heavy set, wham me right in the eye. And then he ran out the corridor and out through the foyer. Didn't get out the door before he was tackled.

HY: By other kids?

LG: Yeah, by other kids his age. They'd seen what happened at any rate and they took him outside. And I really didn't know what to do, looked down—I'm going to have a shiner. And I was back in my office and they took him out and roughed him up a bit and then they brought him back. They asked me to come out of the foyer. They were holding him, physically holding him. Had a—what is it—a half Nelson on his back, arm lock. And they said, "We don't care what you do, but one thing you don't do is you don't hit Kink." And so he had to apologize. (Chuckles) They would have broken his arm if he hadn't apologized. And they let him go. I

felt that the whole operation was a great success. But that was again very typical. It's a therapeutic atmosphere that's built up over the years. And no one worker could destroy it because what they would do is just isolate you, the clientele would or the kids would. Pretty soon, the supervisors would get the word that this person is not satisfactory on staff. So, we always said that the settlement belongs to the community, belongs to the neighborhood. It doesn't belong to the staff, doesn't belong to the director. We're there as facilitators, helpers and such. You're there with the consent of the governed and there's a whole culture that I think is the essence of why so many people think so highly of Pālama and their experience.

HY: If you had a worker go into the home—I don't know if you can generalize on this—but was that generally welcomed, accepted, that somebody from Pālama Settlement would be coming into the home and maybe discussing activities and sort of checking them out really? How receptive were they?

LG: Very receptive. And you don't necessarily go into the house. You might just stand out in front. But you're there in behalf of their child who wants to do something, and you want them to know that it's going to be safe. And then, maybe, just a pretext, but it's a door opener, and you're never obtrusive or intrusive. Later on when you may see that parent over by the swimming pool or something and you have a contact. Over a period of time, you become a trusted part of their family, or the elements that are influencing the family, and you're not unwelcome. And of course, it'll depend if the kid's just been arrested or expelled from school and you know about it. And that is, of course, a threat to the parents' sense of adequacy. So, you've got to be pretty careful how you approach that. By and large, the parents who used the settlement staff, and certainly not all of them did, had a trust, had good vibes from it.

We had a counselor in our day camp program which is just a temporary summer hire, who—six-week hire—was on drugs and sleeping out in the back of the gym and his kids were running all over the place. This was the program I told you about. Nora Furuno's the day camp director. And I wanted her to kick him out, fire him right away. And she said, "No, give me a week." And she at least got him functional and not damaging for the rest of that time. Kids didn't know too much different about it at all. But that's not a kind of a person we would have had on staff.

HY: So you think that this is very different than a caseworker doing home visits.

LG: Yes, deliberately so. We simply don't want to do that in that image. We do confer with the caseworkers. We'll be behind the scenes or out of the picture. The only time that we would send someone in for active intervention is public health nurse. I remember a little kid who must have been about eight or nine. I looked at his big toe and I saw a line going up his leg. The kid had blood poisoning from this infection. And they didn't have a telephone. And I said, "I want you to go home. Tell your mommy I'm going to send the nurse." And the beautiful thing about public health nurses is that you call them up and they're there in about an hour, especially if you've got something like that. It was actually one of our old Pālama nurses who descended right on the family and she had known the family since she'd been a Pālama nurse. Now she's a public health nurse.

And so about a week later, the kid comes in and puts his foot up on my desk and here's this big toe with all this bright new skin and no sign of infection. And he says to me, "And every

day my mommy soak 'em in Pine-O." Okay, that's carbolic acid. I guess it's all right. The nurse must have looked around and said, "Okay, so what have you got handy?" (Laughs) And he was so happy and his mother was very grateful. She hadn't realized how bad it was, how quickly it could have gotten bad. So that type of intervention.

That was basically the idea. Given certain problem families, in the sense where the parents have less control and kid after kid after kid, and that family is shown a lot of acting out problems or arrest rates or such and such, those families are pretty well flagged and everybody's aware. And if there's a new insight or a new development, it's shared very quickly among the professional staff, not with everybody in the place, but those who need to be able to watch and guide.

HY: This includes the coaches, all the different activities?

LG: It'll vary, it'll vary. It may not include the coach, but it will certainly include the athletic director, who's the professional in charge of all of that, who can keep an eye on the coaches. A coach who might just be a volunteer, you're not going to entrust him with confidential information unless it's a very special person. But his supervisor, yes. So department head meetings or the supervisor's meetings we bring these things up, and pretty extensive records are kept. All the club activities, which we considered to be social growth process really, there the staff keeps a narrative record attendance and a narrative record of each meeting of each activity, listing and describing significant behaviors down the line. And you can go back many years into those records. Usually the records are locked up after that whole generation or tribe leaves the area or goes into the service or whatever they're going to do. And there were case files kept, too. Again it would depend on who you had on staff. Janet Kuwahara Nakashima, she was a worker before my time, along with Jennie Lee [In] in the mid-[19]40s, who were placed at the settlement on Child and Family Services monies, but they worked for the settlement staff. And they did some visits and such. They were fairly traditional caseworker style, but it was real—I mean a caseworker working out of Pālama is going to be conferring with a parent by the water fountain or sitting on a bench under a monkey pod tree or something of the sort. They're not coming into the houses kind of thing. And so they kept a lot of family records, particularly [on] younger children or girls that were in trouble. Then we lost them [Janet Nakashima and Jennie In] and they weren't there when I came on. We were able to get Janet back on Community Action money when she came on in the Community Org program, still she was essentially a caseworker. That was basically what I wanted to say.

HY: Oh, okay. I thought . . .

LG: Pretty formal, but not deadly formal. But very conscious and over quite a period of time.

HY: Was there enough parental input so that there were actually programs created or reduced because of their input, or did they have that kind of influence?

LG: Reduced or . . .

HY: Do you create programs because of the input of the community? 'Cause I know it's changed over the years to kind of meet needs. But how much has . . .

LG: There's probably been some of that more recently with the senior citizen input that I really know nothing about. And the feeding programs and such. And some of the adult activities [and programs] that the seniors want for themselves. I know Dottie Lee Kwai, she's had quite an influence on activities. But in my situation, we would have basically ongoing programs that we would ask the parents to help with.

And a beautiful example is the building of the [Pālama Uka] camp where they just swarmed out of the woodwork to do that. Or the parents who would support the swim club and raise money for the swim club and go with them on interisland trips and your normal parent-chaperon type of thing.

We had a home economics program. I guess we had a UH cooperative extension club or something for women, and it was run pretty much by the county agent of UH. We had a big, first class, home economics kitchen, Board of Health approved. And I know they could always be called on to help with something that was going to require feeding kids. Real normal involvements.

But you provide the setting so that parents can do normal things for their kids. And maybe in a middle class setting, they'd find a venue. But in our area, we had to provide it. But all the instincts were there, all the desire to help. And those were good opportunities to informally observe other kids' situations and such, [gain] some insight that perhaps hadn't been there. But you do it as the opportunity arises in the course of normal activity. And it's not a threatening thing at all.

When going to camp, this probably involved the most formal interviews because, if they had to apply for a scholarship, the Council of Social Agencies has this fund every year and we'd get a portion of it. We would want to send a kid a 100 percent free, except that mute boy that I told you about that eventually helped his own brother go. But we have the formality of having a registration. Partially it was poor man's YMCA idea. You want the parents to realize that they're doing something for their kid by registering in the program and maybe applying for scholarship, maybe not, but at least a formal interview like all the other guys do in town, you know.

And [the parent or parents] would come after work or in the evening and you'd have interview time. Get the forms and fill them out. What's [the child] like to do and what's his schoolwork like and so on. This says information is provided to the camp director who would use the judgement in how to provide that information to the camp counselor, the person working directly with the kid. It's information that both the parents provide us and that our own records and experience would provide us, which we'd supplement, which the parents would never see. That's probably the most formal that you got. And kind of painful, too 'cause sometimes you had to do an income bracket situation in order to meet the standards of downtown to qualify. It's part of urban life and we did it as painlessly as we could, but we still did it because it's something everybody's going to have to learn to do and it's appropriate. Just because you're Pālama, you wouldn't want us to treat you like you had no brains and were a freeloader. That wouldn't be very dignifying.

HY: Did you get scholarship money from other sources?

LG: Primarily this was one fund that several foundations in the community contributed to. They

wanted it to be administered by a single source. So, McNerny [Foundation] and Atherton [Trust] would contribute to the Summer Fun program and then it's allocated out. Family court would get some. We'd get some. Almost everybody got a little bit. If we knew that the child was both DSS [Department of Social Services] and us, or family court and us, we'd parlay with the workers, "Who's got the money to send our kid? Who's got the money for it?"

HY: And they were always based on need?

LG: Financial need. Emotional need. Our sense of, we need to get the kid out of that setting for a while. Sometimes both the parent and the kid need some freedom from each other. So, you contrive to get that one out and it was almost a bribe, but necessary because then you have two weeks to work on them in camp. Plus follow up when they come back. And that was another aspect of it. When the camp was well used, things would reveal themselves in a camp setting that you perhaps had not seen in the non-twenty-four hour setting at the settlement.

And that information comes back and the club workers and the supervisors keep an eye on that aspect throughout the balance of the year and the school functioning and what you get the kid into in the way of activities. And then the next camping session, the placement is usually quite conscious that now with this much development this kid needs to go into the setting or the others are a bit older or a bit younger. Which session of camp do we send them to? Which unit do we put them into and such? And then it builds on what we we've been building on. And you see your results and this would go on for several years.

There are so many fellas who say, "If it weren't for Pālama, I'd be in jail." (Laughs) It's very true. Okay.

HY: Okay.

LG: That was it.

HY: Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW

Reflections of Pālama Settlement

Volume I

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